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THE

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

BARTHOLD GEORGE NIEBUHR.

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WITH

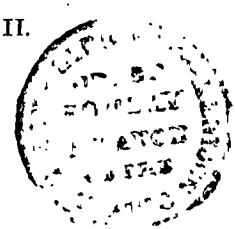
ESSAYS ON HIS CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE

BY THE CHEVALIER BUNSEN,

AND PROFESSORS BRANDIS AND LOEBELL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.
1852.

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LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

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ERRATA TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

Page 23, line 11, *for* "yearling" *read* "yeanling."
70, line 10, *for* "at writing" *read* "at decyphoring writing."
89, line 18, *for* "approved" *read* "opposed."
89, line 38, *for* "past" *read* "great."
178, line 13, *for* "population" *read* "populace."
188, line 11, *for* "elective" *read* "electoral."
195, line 21, *for* "solemn" *read* "solemn silence."
236, line 8, *for* "found" *read* "formed."
316, line 25, *for* "still yet" *read* "yet."
328, line 10, *for* "confinement" *read* "inconvenience."
387, line 11, *for* "a fallen majesty" *read* "fallen majesty."
400, line 15, *for* "when they talk of Chambers, just as they want an entirely new representation" *read* "just as, when they talk of Chambers, they want, &c."
422, line 13, *for* "1815" *read* "1851.

departure for Rome, which had been fixed for April, was again postponed till July, because his instructions were not ready. Meanwhile, the presence of Madame Hensler and her niece gradually cheered him; the former was as closely acquainted with his inward and outward life as his Amelia had been; Margaret Hensler soothed him with her gentle attentions, and gave him peculiar pleasure with her sweet singing. After some time he engaged himself to her, and married her before he left Berlin.

Niebuhr's young wife was well aware that his heart still clung too strongly to the past, for him to be susceptible of positive happiness; she sympathised with his feelings, and trusted that time would restore him to a brighter frame of mind. She was of a noble, affectionate disposition. She could not, indeed, though a cultivated woman, enter into her husband's deeper researches and political ideas, as fully as his first wife had done, but she had strong practical sense, and was devoted to him. Unfortunately for both, her constitution was almost as delicate as that of Amelia.

Niebuhr and his wife wished that Madame Hensler should still accompany them, but she felt that it was best to leave the newly-married pair alone; and felt besides, that it was a somewhat hazardous experiment to transplant herself in middle life into a foreign country and an untried position, when no longer called to do so by the duties of friendship. She, therefore, firmly withstood their pressing entreaties to accompany them, and returned to Kiel.

Extracts from Niebuhr's Letters from August, 1815, *to July*, 1816.

CXCI.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BERLIN, *5th August*, 1815.*

This date would be a sufficient token that I have reached the end of my journey, to you, and to our brothers and sisters, who will most likely be at your house, when this reaches you, expecting to hear some tidings of the poor friend who has left them. Indeed, I cannot write much more for weariness, from which, owing to the heat of the weather, added to the depression produced by my loneliness, I am suffering much more now, than on the more fatiguing journey to Lubec with you.

I arrived here to-day at noon, and found no letters. I feel extremely exhausted. This is only temporary, but shall I ever cease to feel the void, the desolation in my home, which now crushes and deadens my heart? I doubt if these feelings will yield even to the most strenuous occupation. Time will show. I had the same sort of feelings once before, eighteen years ago, when I returned to Copenhagen after my engagement with Milly, and after I had spent so long a time with you; I conquered them then, but it was a terrible struggle. However, I must do as well as I can. On the journey, my eyes often filled with tears, but the constant onward motion did me good, though it was through a very tame country. Now, I sit before the objects which ought to cheer the mind by giving it full occupation, as a sick man, who loathes food, sits before a table which has been carefully spread with all that would please his palate, were he in health.

God reward you for your presence when Milly died, and for staying with me afterwards! If you could have remained here longer, if you were here now, I should feel differently; but it could not be, and perhaps it is best as it is. You

* Written on his return from Lubec.

have again left me a treasure in your remembrance. Oh that I were not so thirsting for conversation, or, rather, for sympathy; that I cannot get used to having no creature with whom I can talk of the past! Only to have a child, like little Sophy, with me that I loved, would be worth more to me now than the most intellectual society. But it is needless to paint to you the feeling of loneliness with which I sit within these dreary walls. It was by the same road that I came to Prussia with Milly; for the most part, the same by which we returned last autumn; I entered the city by the same gate, drove along the same streets. I was so unused to live alone that it made me quite dependent. My inward consciousness refuses to believe that I am alone, even more now, than when you were still here, and I could have the consolation of speaking of my sorrow with you. When I awake from sleep, for the first moment I cannot believe in my solitude. You know how, when the news of victory first came,* and every time fresh tidings of advance were brought us, I always used to turn round, as if I could still go to her bedside and tell her about it. I feel as if Milly or you *must* be near and within reach, as you always have been in past times, for me to tell you all that is in my thoughts.

There is, indeed, no need to cherish and feed these feelings to render them lasting; but to try to repress them would seem to me a sin, and a renunciation of the only medium of communication by which I can reach Milly, and afford her the one blessing which was indispensable to her in life. But the difficulty will be to combine the emotion which arises from this, with the firmness, without which I should be more liable than ever to sink under my grief.

A thousand, thousand thanks to you for all your boundless and unspeakable love and faithfulness, and you must say the same to our brothers and sisters, for the love which they have shown me both face to face and in their letters. I feel sure you will write the day after to-morrow; that you will not wait to receive this. How could such formality be possible between us? I quite reckon upon receiving a letter

* The entrance of the Allies into Paris.

from you on Friday—the first to me alone for sixteen years; and I shall count the days till it comes. Beg Behren and Lene and Freddy to write very often to me also. My sister will do it without reminding. They all know how dear they and their letters are to me. I want to know how travelling agrees with Cartheuser, and what he is going to do.

My journey was not attended with any personal inconveniences. With several of the postilions I chatted very sociably; in this way one learns a great deal; and even among this class, friendliness goes further than large fees without it; at least with many. The one from Ratzeburg was quite sorry that he could not drive me further; he, and one of those in Mecklenburg, had been robbed of their hard-earned savings by the French. He gave the Danes a good character; there were bad men, indeed, everywhere, but at Ratzeburg they had mostly sided with the inhabitants, and protected them against the French; they were not to be complained of. How is that beautiful country disfigured! Almost all the wood in the valley in which the city is situated, has been cut down during the war. I have heard much, which I can well believe, of the bitter poverty left behind, after those calamitous times have passed away; of the heavy contributions levied on the inhabitants of Mecklenburg; of the gradual drying up of all sources of trade. With us, too, things are bad enough, but the people bear their burdens cheerfully; in the Marches every one is in good spirits, and things look encouraging, at least for the agricultural population.

I will now go out and make one or two calls.

Farewell! Of course I shall write again soon, and will always write when I want to lighten my heart. With a little use, I could sit at the table before the sofa, and silently converse with Milly and you; but that would be a short road to insanity.

CXCII.

BERLIN, 17*th August*, 1815.

"The quiet melancholy which you desire for me, I seldom enjoy. I am, indeed, sufficiently alone, but my mind is in sad confusion. Every thing around me jars upon my feelings like a false note. The mornings are my least desolate times, because I rise late, and go to sleep late, generally with some fever, so that I awake weary and stupefied. I am the freshest about the middle of the day. The alterations which the servants have made in the arrangements of the furniture during my absence, are the following. . . . . My only wish would be, never to leave this dwelling, for here I always feel as if Milly were still alive and with me, and often as if I saw and heard her busy about her household duties, or other things. At first, I only saw her as she was during her illness, sitting, or lying down, but now, as she used to be in former times. You are just as present to me. When I go out, something impels me home again, and makes me feel as I used to do, when Milly was uneasy if I did not come home again as soon as possible.

Evening.—Schmedding has just left me. I have had some hours of consoling conversation with him. The Reimers are at Magdeburg, and at the Göschens the swarm of dear little children unavoidably disturbs conversation; else neither of these families is among the number of those who shun all allusion to the only subject which it relieves me to speak of. You must not fancy that I should not enjoy conversation on scientific subjects even now, but this is not started, and what is said is not congenial to me. With Schmedding I talked a good deal about my future vocation, and not a little of Milly and you. You have left a strong impression on him, too, and he sees that your accompanying me would be the only blessing I could still enjoy. He himself was very much affected, and I was able to give way to my feelings with him.

The constant rain, together with my great lassitude, and the distance, have prevented my visiting the cemetery as yet,

to see how far the workmen have got on. For God's sake do not take it for negligence! On Sunday morning, I shall go to the mason, whom it is not easy to find at any other time, and on Monday, to the foundry. I cannot yet say, therefore, when I can lay the beloved corpse in its cool bed. I should like to do it on my birthday, and I hope to be able to manage it.

You long to see Milly, if only for a moment? The promises that you would fain give her, she has already received by words and deeds from you, and taken with her into eternity. I dare not cherish the wish that you express; for I feel as if it might very possibly be granted to me, and would cost me my reason.

I can occupy myself, thank Heaven! and if I could only stay here in quiet, all would be well. At least, I am reading records, and have also begun canon law.

Rauch will in no case go direct to Rome. I shall, therefore, still be much obliged to you to write to Lund, and offer him to travel with me free of expense. If I do not go yet, he can stay with me as a visitor till we set off.

CXCIII.

BERLIN, *8th September*, 1815.

I often busy myself with plans for profiting, to the utmost extent, by the advantages Rome presents: I should certainly need some assistants in order to do so. Perhaps it is true, as people say, that in the clearer and brighter atmosphere there, one can work incomparably harder than here; it had need be so, if I am to get my History written, in addition to performing the duties of my office, and studying the city and its treasures. I must, by degrees, search through all the manuscripts of the Vatican; by so doing I can scarcely fail of making some discoveries. I think I have a trace, which will not disappoint my hope of digging up a treasure, in an almost unknown Greek poet. I shall also look for palimpsests, amongst the parchments in the archives, as well as those in the library. But all this enlarges the sphere of my researches

so indefinitely, that my goal seems quite to have receded out of sight.

. . . . Heindorf has drawn my attention to the fragments of Heyne's autobiography contained in Heeren's; I recommend you to read them also. It is quite another question, whether or not Heyne, who afterwards tried to grasp much more than he could retain, and accepted, as his due, the exaggerated admiration and false fame that was offered to him, was a distinguished philologist; and this praise must be denied him. But the picture of his character, of his struggles under difficulties, and of his mind, which is given by these biographical fragments, as well as the poems prefixed to the work, deserves all respect.

CXCIV.

BERLIN, *15th September*, 1815.

For some time past, I have been very unwell; but it was, perhaps, nothing more than a cold, though I had pains in my chest. At last it turned to influenza, which obliged me to take to my bed. However, I have remained true to my resolution, not to yield to effeminacy again, and yesterday I went out. I rejoice in this heavenly weather and lose the painful sense of solitude: you like a beautiful autumn better than the summer, and Milly liked it too. We once enjoyed a most exquisitely beautiful autumn in Copenhagen; we took long walks in all directions, without regard to distance, and this afforded Milly the full enjoyment of what was to her the highest gratification. That was in the times when we lived as yet in perfect seclusion, when there were many, many days on which we had not a single caller, and whole periods passed away without our, or even my making a visit. I had a dim feeling that it was best for us both; Milly was less satisfied; and yet the storms and billows of the world have been too much for her strength. Heindorf's stay with me has cheered me in another way. It is refreshing to feel that the pleasure of seeing one, can give animation and cheerful-

ness to a friend from whom one has long been separated. You know how soothing this consciousness is, and how I have, more than once, renewed my youth in your society. Heindorf has done the same among his friends here, of whom I am one of the dearest to him, and I do not care whether others be still dearer to him or not. . . . .

Reserve, the silence of profound meditation, complete absorption in one's own thoughts, are easily recognised and must be honoured; but where there is great talkativeness in general, and it is only when the conversation turns upon what is known to be the real vocation of the man, that it ceases to flow freely, there must be other causes than those I have mentioned; the man's heart is not in his calling, he does not live in it. Or, what comes to the same thing, he has not worked out results, which he cherishes, and with which he holds converse. Now this has been accomplished by Heindorf, to a wonderful extent, with regard to grammatical rules, and all that belongs to the narrower sphere of philology, so that he can form positive decisions, for which he can always instantly assign his reasons, where others have only a dim feeling. That he has elaborated his philological system, by unwearied assiduity, in spite of constant ill-health from his childhood up; that he has never allowed himself to be stopped in his progress by sickness; that he thinks nothing of all his knowledge and acquirements, and knows no greater happiness than the admiration and love of those whom he rates above himself; that he even sets little value upon his peculiar department of philology compared to others; that friendship and kindness are his sole enjoyments,—all this makes him one of the most loveable persons among the literary men of my acquaintance. I am somewhat proud of his dedicating the most perfect of his writings to me, and inwardly rejoice that the one, with which he has connected my name, is that which, he says, will certainly endure, and has been written for posterity.

To give him some pleasure during his stay with us, I invited his friends to meet him at a dinner in the Thiergarten the day before yesterday, and asked Nicolovius and Rauch,

(who spoils no society) as well. It was the first party that I had really enjoyed for many months. One is tempted indeed to reproach oneself afterwards, but yet it is right perhaps to change the current of one's thoughts. In former times too, I have reproached myself for it, if I enjoyed myself in a party which Milly did not share, and I preferred staying away on such occasions, because Milly never had, or would have, any pleasure for herself alone, so that she had much fewer enjoyments than I, and I would not suffer that. In general, too, she preferred my refusing invitations without her; but after her illness assumed a serious character, she altered in this respect, and wished me to go into society, for the sake of change of scene and amusement. However, at that time, it would have been unbearable to me.

There are many things which become indispensable to us, when we are accustomed to them; and if you are conscious of being able to fill more than one vocation, you cannot repress the impulse to embrace more than one. Indeed, you feel that you wrong the cause, as well as yourself, if you renounce either of them. This is my feeling now with regard to the highest spheres of statesmanship. Unhappily we always learn wisdom too late, and I shudder when I look at the years that lie behind me, and the age I have already reached. But this terror is nothing to my bitter remorse for faults and oversights on higher matters—the remembrance of which would soon overwhelm me, if I dwelt upon it, and yet, not to drive it from me, seems the only possible atonement for them. If there be another and a real atonement—for what destroys the energies, and makes life useless, cannot be the right one—Oh how thankful I should be to any one who would announce it to me!

Your welcome letter has again done me much good.

CXCV.

TO PERTHÈS.

BERLIN, *September*, 1815.

I thank you for the interest you take in my mission, which is at least highly probable, though not absolutely and irrevocably fixed. My heart can scarcely be light or joyful, when I am bidding farewell to my country, most probably for the whole of the short portion yet remaining to my life; but certainly for so long a time, that if I return, it will be to live as a stranger in my own land, with changed feelings, and with habits that cannot be altered at an advanced age. Especially as the work which is the calling of my life, the Roman History, however the reverse may seem evident, cannot by any means be so well composed there as here. Finally, I must renounce the tasks that the times continually set before us, and in the performance of which, I have a most distinct inward call to co-operate. Now, if the ambassador to Rome were but the mediator of wise and wholesome measures,—but he is only the instrument of what he is ordered to undertake, and how little that will be in harmony with my views I can already perceive. For the true welfare of the Catholic church in our State, such a spokesman can do nothing at all,—since the ecclesiastical authorities of the Papacy are obstinately bent upon keeping the Church under their own jurisdiction, and the deep inward degeneracy of the Catholic clergy is not less prejudicial to it, than the many perverse and mischievous views held by Protestant statesmen.

Many form an idea of this office, which is quite at variance with the reality, and then congratulate me on a mission, which would indeed be glorious, if the attributes they assume, really belonged to it.

As regards philology alone, unquestionably my stay there cannot be useless. But I should have accomplished much more, could I have kept strictly to the unconditional furlough granted me in the first instance. The ambassador is nailed down to Rome, and Rome does not contain the

twentieth part of the literary and historical treasures of Italy which would reward the labour of bringing them to light; these are scattered over the whole country. But it is ordained that everything good must be spoilt.

CXCVI.

TO PROFESSOR BRANDIS.

BERLIN, 26*th September*, 1815.

You have applied to me, dear friend, on a matter in which you need counsel and assistance, and you apologise for it with a bashfulness which proves that in this amiable, but self-tormenting weakness, you are the same as of old, just as you are in all other points, but especially—and of this no one will ever doubt—in your sentiments towards your friends. I wish you could know, *to your shame*, not only how interesting your letter is to me, but how full of melancholy pleasure, for it recalls vividly to my mind that time when you were with us in Berlin, as companion to my sister-in-law. The recollection of that time is indeed a melancholy pleasure to me, which you, too, could not willingly forget. It was the epoch at which I reached the quiet and secure haven of literary leisure, after passing through the storms that had convulsed society; when a period of contentment and happiness began which aroused all the inmost powers of my being, and rendered me capable of enterprises which I had long despaired of undertaking. Now, all is night around me; I have lost *all* which then made me rich, and taught me the true value of my riches; yet there are moments of strength, when the memory of the past is a source not of torture, but of consolation. I thank you too most sincerely for the confidence you place in me; for when a man has found that all his confidence in others has been abused, and that there is no firm rock on which he can build, and yet is conscious that he is himself faithful and trustworthy, he feels deep gratitude towards those who do him justice and trust him.

It is very right and reasonable that you should wish to come to Prussia. That State in North Germany, which gladly receives every German and regards him, when he has once entered her service, in the same light as a native citizen, is the true Germany; and it is comparatively of little consequence whether it may cause some inconvenience to other neighbouring States, which persist in their isolation, in the face of God's providence and the general welfare, or even whether temporary and accidental defects may exist in its administration. They are but the moles in the face of the beloved one; I would not exchange our nation for ancient Rome itself. In Denmark you, as a German, can never breathe freely, can never feel that you have a father-land. Therefore you are right, and in the path of duty, to leave it, even if philology, and the other liberal branches of knowledge, were in a better condition there than is actually the case. I hope that the time will come, when the facility with which Germans make themselves at home in foreign countries will no longer form a trait in the national character, and rejoice over every instance I meet with. But the sudden progress which science and letters have made in Germany, renders it impossible for the philologist to find a fitting sphere beyond its limits, and this consciousness oppresses me when I look forward to my removal to Italy. Antiquity in walls and stones is but the shadow of antiquity; the spirit lives in the ancient writings.

I thank you most cordially for your friendly wishes concerning my future fate. God will not let it become too hard to bear. He, who has long been the spoilt child of fortune, feels indeed bitter pain when he finds himself stripped of all his possessions and beggared; but he, too, learns to endure.

I hope that a very dear friend of mine, an excellent officer of our army, will join me in Rome as soon as he can obtain leave of absence, and so I shall not be quite alone and forsaken in the strange country, of which I have an indescribable dread. Besides such isolated instances of faithfulness, and love which truly deserves the name, we have a source

of joy and strength, such as we never knew before, in the social and patriotic feelings that have prevailed in Germany since 1813, and we know it is not a delusion which we are cherishing in our hearts.

CXCVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

30*th September*, 1815.

The funeral has had to be put off again; the grave was not ready. Else I should have snatched myself from my bed, and—perhaps God would have blessed me for it with a shorter illness. Thus, I have been obliged to give up the hope of having the whole finished in the course of this week. So I shall bury my beloved Amelie on Sunday, the 8th of October. It is the anniversary of our arrival here, and of a completely new period of our lives, full of joy and sorrow.

I had written so far, when I fell into a state of insensibility, from which I was only recovered with difficulty, and then fell asleep. I wanted to give you further particulars of the requests I have to make of you. So now I am really seriously ill, which I promised to let you know of. . . . .

CXCVIII.

BERLIN, 9*th October*, 1815.

At last I have reached the goal, and laid the corpse of our beloved one in its resting-place. It was yesterday afternoon at five o'clock; the very hour at which we entered Berlin nine years ago; it was just growing dark then as we turned into our lodging; as it was now when I returned alone to my desolate room.

In the morning I attended service in St. Mary's church, where a very good man preached, and prepared myself with a still heart for the bitter way. Nicolovius and Göschen, who knew of it, came in the afternoon to accompany me. May God reward them for it, as well as for all the love and sympathy they show me! We found everything ready, and the coffin was lowered. When it had been let down, I sat

on the planks, and was able to weep bitterly, and to pray from the bottom of my heart. God knows that I would gladly have rested in the grave, and that I looked with sorrowful longing on the empty space which, I feel assured, will never receive my corpse.

In the evening I was quite alone again, and sufficiently composed to set about some necessary work. I felt more satisfied, as if I had laid my Milly in her bed.

I will send you the occasional paper by the first opportunity;* and with it a catalogue of the works of art that have been recaptured and are now exhibiting. The Dantzic Last Judgment is a miracle of art, perhaps the highest specimen of its kind.

CXCIX.

BERLIN, *15th October*, 1815.

N.† left me an hour ago.—I have had a long conversation with him. First about myself; and then about my business in Rome, and what is to be done for the Catholic Church.—I told him, that all such measures as might really raise the church from her terrible state of internal decay, lay entirely within the sphere of the legislature and the government, so much so, that if they fail to do their part, no formal regulations to which the assent of the Romish court would be necessary, could avail anything, but must remain utterly fruitless. The measures most necessary to be adopted at home, are to make a suitable provision for the payment of the clergy in the Rhine provinces, West Prussia and Posen, as in these countries the church lands have been confiscated; (on the other side of the Rhine the salary of the parochial clergy has only amounted to 130 dollars per annum since the concordat;) to raise the character of the instruction in schools of every grade; to establish good Catholic universities, (in which, however, we are met by the insuperable difficulty,

* The preface to Von Vincke's work on "The Internal Administration of Great Britain."

† No doubt Nicolovius.

that in that church knowledge and talents are now so extremely seldom combined with piety—you can find the one or the other, but scarcely ever the two in union) and to choose eminent men for the cathedral chapters, which would secure the election of such for bishops, and, where the choice of the bishops falls immediately to the crown, to appoint only men of high character. Moreover, all decisions relating to the better regulation of the Catholic Church to which the assent of the Pope is necessary, ought to emanate from this place, and to be despatched to the ambassador in a finished state. The latter would never be authorised to remonstrate against them: this would be to overstep the duties of his position. I told him that if the proposals were reasonable it would require very little skill to get them accepted; if they were unreasonable it might still be possible to carry them through; but who would suffer himself to be an instrument in such a work? With respect to many things of which the people here fancy the attainment possible, they should recall H's* words: "The angel Gabriel could not bring them to pass at Rome. The negotiations there might be divided into two classes, such as could be very easily transacted, and such as could not be transacted at all." I said, too, that skilful negotiation with Italians, patient preparation, silent observation of character in order to find out how to work upon it, were not my forte, and besides it was long since I had had any practice of the kind. If, indeed, men awoke once more to great aims, and great endeavours, if one could embrace all around one with affection as in 1813, then in truth my powers of mind might also re-awaken; but here there was nothing great either to be done or sacrificed, nor yet to be obtained in a straightforward way by simple skill. As to resisting the encroachments of Rome, it was needless to preach to any one on that subject; every one would do that who had not sold his heart to the priestly party.

Yesterday I was too sad to write to you. I tried to

* Probably W. Von Humboldt, who had been ambassador in Rome.

distract my thought by paying the Dohnas a visit, and I got something better than amusement by it. They were both very friendly and showed much feeling; and I was able to talk about my Milly. Believe me, it pains me more than anything, that no one enters at all into conversation with me on this subject. Everyone is silent when I speak of her. I am indeed not quite well, and still rather feverish; but in a tender and calm state of feeling. For some time my sufferings were great; you know in general, from my letters, my condition from time to time. As it frequently passed into painful nervous excitement, this will explain and excuse to you the irritability which has frequently appeared in them. My natural disposition is gentle—as it was when you first knew me; my irritability has come on much later in life. I miss two things in my Milly:—the life with her, and her love. But this is not all; I also miss the indescribable energy, which she imparted to me in a far higher degree than I was aware of. The grave is now in order. Would to God, that it might one day receive me, when I had fallen peacefully asleep in the consciousness of having fulfilled my true vocation.

CC.

BERLIN, 12*th December*, 1815.

Your letter has been a great comfort to me. I feel much more satisfied, in the prospect of living with you. What I shall still feel the loss of, and enjoyed when I had my Milly with me, we will mourn over together. I only hope that now you will be able to come with an easy mind. I dread these last days for you, and the parting from those who have always known what they possessed in you. I shall be a debtor to all of them. . . . .

My mind will be opened to the enjoyment of the treasures of Rome, and the beginning of a completely new life may, perhaps, make me young again. I am very glad that our circle of intercourse will be small; it promises me a life of close application to study.

A very unsatisfactory tone of feeling prevails here, as is

the case, perhaps, throughout Germany. The interest in literature is so much on the decline (indeed it is weaker now than during and after the fever of the French Revolution), and our bright visions so fade away one after another, that we cannot help perceiving that the noblest opportunities of attaining a permanently higher intellectual standing for the nation have been thrown away or abused; and we have reason to fear that an age of mediocrity is before us. Great injury must inevitably result from so large a part of our youth having taken the field for a second time; they are nearly all snatched away from their studies. The first war did them no harm, but that was conducted in a different spirit from the present one. The regiments of the line have given way to excesses, and what is still worse, many officers have acquired a taste for Paris. The noble path of life is terribly narrow. I have very few hearers as yet.

As Gretchen herself has some apprehensions, do not persuade her to come with us. Only I should be so glad if you could have some companion, who could be like a daughter to you. If you could but have little Sophy or Louisa.

Since the weather has become so severe, I often vividly recall the time that I spent with Milly in Bordesholm, in the winter of 1800—a golden age for her and for me.

Pray take Christmas presents to the dear children at Meldorf in my name; and choose something pretty for our friends at Husum.

CCI.

BERLIN, 23*rd December*, 1815.

. . . . On Tuesday, Hardenberg sent for me, and fixed to have an interview with me the next day; the result of which is, that he has appointed me one of the Royal Commissioners to take part in the deliberations on the Constitution. This will necessitate an indefinite postponement of our journey, for a considerable time will probably elapse before the delegates to the assembly are even named, much more before they arrive in Berlin. This may not take place, perhaps,

till the end of January, and then we know by experience how slowly business advances in an assembly the members of which are totally unused to deliberations in common. So, though Hardenberg himself fancies that the work might be finished by the end of March, or at furthest in April, we cannot at all reckon upon this being the case, and, in fact, it is impossible to fix any time for the termination of our labours. . . . . I do not know whether I shall find any sympathy with my views among my fellow-members of the assembly, but I feel as if I should have missed an essential calling of my life, if I had had no share in the drawing up of the Constitution. We cannot expect that this work will result in the establishment of thoroughly mature and wise institutions at the present moment. It can only be a beginning and a germ, to be gradually developed by time and circumstances. But if this opportunity can be seized to carry through even a few good laws, they may have lasting consequences. It will be a satisfaction to you also, that I have received this commission; and when I said, at first, that it was not quite welcome to me personally, that was only in reference to its lengthening my separation from you. . . .

I have got the Servian national songs, and shall translate them where it is possible; they are very beautiful. This season carries my thoughts back to the past very much. It was a time that Milly always enjoyed so much. Oh how willingly would I give my whole life for one year with her! Even if it were a life most rich in pleasures and prosperity. Yet a life rich in activity and usefulness I should not dare to sacrifice even at that price, and she would not wish it. May she watch over me (as you will too, with her spirit), and at last receive me to herself in peace.

CCII.

BERLIN, 16*th January*, 1816.

"A stranger has brought me a collection of modern Greek songs. I send you a translation I have made of one of them. Perhaps it will draw tears from you, as it did from me. The modern Greeks believe that the soul does not part from the body till the form of the latter is destroyed by corruption. A child speaks thus from its grave to its mother:—

"Beyond the rocky mountain peak, that rises high and frowning,
Its summit wrapped in floating clouds, its steep glens dim and misty,
There grows the herb forgetfulness, beside the still cold fountain.
The mother-ewe eats of the herb, and then forgets her yearling;
My mother, pluck the soothing herb, and then forget thy darling."

The Mother.—"A thousand times I'll pluck the herb, but I forget thee never."*

In another song, which begins—

"Thou fiery-red carnation, thou purple hyacinth,"

the soul of the child, whose body is decaying, takes leave of the flowers which are planted on his grave, and asks them to bend down their heads to receive a kiss, and transmit it to his parents. Another relates how Charon, now the dæmon of death, passes on his horse through the village, with the host of dead after him, the little ones hanging to the saddle; the poet entreats him to stop by the cool spring, that the souls may speak one word to their loved ones, and the children play with the flowers! He denies it: they would not be willing to leave it again. Many illustrate the praises of heroes, who are, it must be allowed, only captains of robber

* "Jenseits vom steilen Felsgebirg, das hoch dort ragt und düster,
—Die Scheitel decken Wolken ihm, und Nebel füllt die Klüfte—
Da wächst am stillen kalten Quell, Vergessenheit das Kräutlein.
Das Kräutlein pflückt das Mutterschaaf, vergiszt sodann der Lämmer.
Das Kräutlein pflück', mein Mütterchen, vergisz sodann des Kleinen."
Die Mutter. "Ich pflück' es mir wohl tausendmal, vergesse Dein doch nimmer!"

bands, but what men! You soon become accustomed to the rhythm, and exclaim with delight, that it is poetry not beneath the poetry of old Greece! . . . .

CCIII.

BERLIN, 20*th January*, 1816.

. . . . Some one preached to me lately that I should do this, and that; take up my history, &c. I answered, happy is the man who has succeeded in convincing himself that the simple act of willing can enable himself and others to do every thing. If so, how superfluous are all intellectual gifts! We need only exert our will, and we are competent, not merely, as all the world has believed hitherto, to tasks requiring research and industry, but to produce works of genius. And this under all circumstances! It is not true, therefore, that genius is unfolded by outward circumstances, as plants and flowers are by spring-tide and summer, and that there are times and cases when genius can no more exist than the violet can blow in the autumn: it is not true, that in the age of Alexander there were no great poets, because there could be none then. From this truth, we may soar upwards in a straight line to the regions in which Fichte seemed to us weaklings to rave, and look forward to the time when the will may suffice to make the rocks bear fruit, and the glaciers bring forth corn. We may spare ourselves all sympathy with our sick and weak brother; it is his own fault if he does not choose to be healthy. . . . .

CCIV.

BERLIN, 30*th January*, 1816.

. . . . Since [reading my treatise last Wednesday in the Academy] I have been busied in preparing the Fronto for the press. Heindorf and Buttmann take part in the critical revision of it, but by far the largest and most difficult task falls to my share. The Milanese editor has put together the loose leaves, (which are quite unconnected, only legible in parts, and altogether form only a small portion of the

whole work,) without the slightest regard to their natural order, and printed them in such a manner, that you cannot see where one fragment begins and another ends. I have been obliged to reduce this chaos to the fragments of which it is composed in the first instance, and must next bring together the parts which are immediately connected, or only separated by fragments which are lost. It is a work of great labour, but for which I have a peculiar talent, so that if I did not undertake it, centuries might perhaps elapse before the poor dismembered thing would find any one to put its limbs in their places again. . . . .

You ask after my cough. I really cannot say when it began; but I have been suffering from colds ever since the beginning of December, because I am obliged to go out in all weathers; to dinner, to the Crown Prince, to the riding-school, and when I want to escape from solitude; and then generally I have to walk long distances. About a fortnight ago, my cough was really very bad; now it is of no consequence, only it is constantly irritated by the dust, and damp, and draught, at the riding-school, so that I have been sometimes afraid I must give up this pursuit. This would be a pity, for I have conquered the greatest difficulty; I have lost my awkwardness, and am told that I have much improved in agility. I feel safe and bold on horseback. If I remain a part of the summer here, I shall attend the shooting-gallery, and perhaps the fencing-school. When my cough was at the worst, it was a welcome thought to me that perhaps it might be a legacy from my beloved Milly; the best gift she could leave behind with me.

A thousand thanks for your tender and sympathising letter. But you do not know, you did not see, and cannot understand, how a work such as my History arises, and can alone arise,—in love and joy only, not in affliction, anguish, and bereavement.

CCV.

BERLIN, 10*th February*, 1816.

. . . . . My author himself is a miserable hero, but the letters are extremely attractive, especially the youthful letters of Marcus Antoninus, which throw much light upon his inward history. What an angel do we find here too! But he likewise appears to have fallen in his later years under the sway of a woman, who has much more resemblance to Marie Antoinette, than poor Louis to Marcus Antoninus; and this book makes it clearer, and more comprehensible, how it should have been possible for the rule of this heavenly man to promote and hasten the dissolution and corruption of the State.

I have heard nothing more about the plague in Italy; but I feel we must not at all conclude from this that the report of it was false. . . . . .

CCVI.

BERLIN, 20*th February*, 1816.

I no longer doubt that we shall go to Italy, unless the plague prove an obstacle, in which case I should have great scruples about it, and, if you went with me, feel very anxious. There are certainly other considerations against it, with regard to Gretchen, which press heavily on my heart. I have foretold the spreading of the pestilence to Italy ever since the autumn, as many can bear me witness; it is not from any prophetic gift of mine, but on very natural grounds. It attacked Venetian Dalmatia a year ago, from which it had, up to that time, been excluded by quarantine regulations. It has also penetrated into Austrian Croatia, and is raging in Corfu. Hence we had reason to fear that it would advance from the Adriatic Sea over Italy. Besides, I hold to my assertion, that under certain circumstances—when Death is hungry—it overpowers all the obstacles which in ordinary times bar its progress. That such is the case at present, we may conclude from the fact that it has reached Corfu and Croatia, where all possible

precautions have been observed, and up to this time successfully.

Flight might not be found quite so practicable; if a place is really threatened, no one is allowed to pass thence to the neighbouring districts. But I think that the spread or cessation of the epidemic must be decided before we enter Lombardy, and, if God permit, we may wait in the Venetian Alps to see what turn things will take. . . . .

CCVII.

BERLIN, 27*th February*, 1816.

Although here, as well as abroad, they keep to the system of leaving the public in the dark respecting the pestilence, things come to light from time to time, from which the danger seems to grow more and more decided. The plague does not simply slay its victims and depopulate countries; it eats away the moral energies as well, and often quite destroys them; thus, as I have shown in my last public lecture before the Academy, the sudden and complete degeneracy of the Roman world from the time of Marcus Antoninus onward, may be referred to the oriental plague which then entered Europe for the first time; just as, six hundred years earlier, the plague, which was strictly speaking a yellow fever, coincides too exactly with the termination of the ideal period of antiquity, not to be regarded as a cause of it. In such epidemics the best individuals always die, and the rest degenerate morally. Times of pestilence are always those in which the animal and the devilish in human nature assume prominence. Neither need we be superstitious or even pious, to regard great pestilences as something more than a conflict of the physical with the human history of the earth: I fear my conviction that it indicates the victory of the negative and destructive, of the two contending principles, would be thought terribly Manichæan and impious.

CCVIII.

BERLIN, *29th June*, 1816.*

I had so much to say to you, I do not know what I can and will say. I therefore intend to write very little to you to-day, and to wait for your letter. I may still receive it here; and I hope that you will reckon upon it, as it is settled that Brandis is to come to us here.†

My thoughts have travelled with you; you have arrived by this time. We still mean to depart at the time fixed with Brandis. . . . .

Heindorf died last Sunday without being sensible of his approaching end. His friends will now have to look after his seven orphans. My position will allow me to take my share. Why was I never able to promise it to him? Yet he no doubt relied on his friend.‡

In the evening after you had left us, when your carriage went out of sight and I returned home, I felt very sad. Gretchen's spirits were quite overcome by the parting, and I recovered myself in trying to console her.

God grant that you may be happy! You need only wish for me the enjoyment of tolerable health; for as it is now I can never get on. All will rejoice to have you back again. Rejoice with them; but remain to me what you have been.

Give our best love to all our friends.

CCIX.

BERLIN, *6th July*, 1816.

Your confidence that I should become more tranquil, has not quite deceived you; I am so on the whole. Gretchen does all in her power to promote it. She enters thoroughly

* This was the first letter Niebuhr wrote after his parting from Madame Hensler, and her return home.

† Brandis accompanied Madame Hensler on her return to Holstein.

‡ In an earlier letter, Niebuhr says: "one of the sons is my godchild. I shall provide for him." For several years after Heindorf's death, his family received a considerable sum of money regularly every year, without being able to discover whence it came. In process of time, as their circumstances improved, it ceased, and it was only after many years that Niebuhr was found to be the author of this assistance, in addition to the other friendly offices he rendered them.

and kindly into my state of feeling. She keeps herself constantly employed, and has shown the greatest method and judgment in the arrangements and preparations for our removal and packing up, which she has executed with indefatigable energy. She says indeed, when she sees me sad, that it would depress her terribly if she did not hope that I should recover my spirits again in time.

I do not despair of my mental powers. I derive much benefit from simple warm baths; they have already given a more healthy tone to my nerves. Gretchen has stood the fatigues of packing very well. Her chest is quite free from oppression, and she has little pain in her side.

Our departure is positively fixed for the thirteenth. I shall not take my instructions with me; it would take too long to wait for them as I had intended, and so I shall travel forward at once. Hardenberg has promised to send them after me.

We shall most likely take the most direct route. The two months and a half from now to the end of September is so short, that we must curtail our stay wherever we can, in order to stop long enough at the important places to make some use of them. I have no answer from Goethe; his wife is dead.

You will write as often to me as you have time and ability. Pray write by the next post to Nuremberg, and a week later to Munich. I shall probably stay more than a week in Munich.

I look forward to the journey with great pleasure—as much as I can now feel. Gretchen also enjoys the prospect.

The sorting and arranging of my old papers has again excited my sad feelings. Many of them you will one day read, not without emotion; some merit to be preserved. However, I do not now think that my death is near. Love to our friends. I shall write you one more letter home. God bless you. Farewell.

CCX.

BERLIN, *20th July*, 1816.

Your anxiously expected letter, in which and from which I hoped to take a blessing with me on my journey, has never arrived. Perhaps you have been persuaded to remain at Husum. If so, ten or twelve days will elapse before I find your letter at Nuremberg.

I am so tired and exhausted that even if you were actually here I could scarcely say anything rational to you. My audience with the King was on Wednesday, and not till then could we make definitive preparations for the journey. The next day, my Milly's birthday, I wanted to celebrate here; that is, at her grave.

I cannot describe the feelings with which I leave this place. I often forget my sorrows, but I cannot yet be happy. The general aspect of political affairs also weighs heavily on my mind.

The Crown Prince has taken a very affectionate leave of me, and shed tears at parting. All the other princes are likewise cordial and friendly.

People in general express sincere regret at my leaving, and hope that I shall return with official advancement; which I, whose judgment is unwarped, do not at all expect.

The best piece of news I have to tell you is, that Gretchen's health is much improved.

I must conclude. God bless you richly a thousand-fold. If possible I shall write a few lines to you daily during our journey.

CHAPTER X.

NIEBUHR'S MISSION IN ROME. FROM 1816 TO 1823.

FROM this time forward, Niebuhr was so entirely removed from the friends of his earlier life, that few facts respecting his outward history are to be obtained excepting from his own letters. These, however, succeed each other in such an almost unbroken series, that they require but few connecting links, and therefore there is little occasion to regret the absence of other sources of information. But, while his letters give a very complete picture of his personal circumstances and occupations, it must always be borne in mind, that most of them were written under great restraint with regard to the expression of opinion upon outward events, on account of the surveillance exercised at the post-offices of the countries through which they passed. He often had to deny himself the utterance of a sentiment altogether, for fear of the total suppression of the letter.

Niebuhr quitted Berlin in July. His friend, Dr. Brandis (now Professor of Philosophy in Bonn), accompanied him as Secretary of Legation. He had made the choice of his secretary a condition of his accepting the mission, and in the first instance had offered the post to Professor

Dahlman, who however declined it, having just accepted the office of Representative to the nobles and prelates of Schleswig-Holstein.

Niebuhr first visited Munich, where he stayed a week, partly to look through the MSS. of the Royal Library, partly to see his aged friend, Jacobi. Thence he proceeded to Innspruck, and visited the memorable scenes of the Tyrolese war. The next place at which he made any stay was Verona, where likewise he explored the manuscript treasures contained in the library, and made his famous discovery of the Institutes of Gaius. He spent a short time at Venice, Bologna, and Florence, and reached Rome on the 7th of October.

Niebuhr had sent his books by sea to Leghorn. He soon learnt that the ship had been wrecked at Calais, and was for several months in uncertainty respecting their fate. As no books were allowed to be taken out of the public libraries, he was for a considerable time deprived of the means of pursuing his studies, and this, joined to the ill health which seized both him and his wife almost immediately on their entrance into Italy, and the, to him, unaccustomed privation of all intellectual intercourse, account for the tone of depression which prevails in his earlier letters from Rome. In spite of these disadvantages, however, he turned his time to account, as far as possible, by visiting the library of the Vatican, and in November, discovered the fragments of Cicero's orations, and some of Livy, Seneca, and Hyginus; after which he occupied himself assiduously with their correction and preparation for the press. Their publication, however, was from many causes delayed for several years,

Niebuhr's relations with the court of Rome assumed a very satisfactory aspect from the first. A mutual liking sprang up between him and the excellent Pope Pius VII., and he was on terms of personal friendship with Cardinal Gonsalvi, the prime minister and secretary of state, of whose character as a statesman Niebuhr had a high opinion. During the earlier years of his residence in Rome, Niebuhr had merely to despatch the current business with the Papal court, as the instructions for his special mission, which Hardenberg had promised to send after him in a few weeks, did not arrive for four years.

His intercourse in Rome, beyond that which he enjoyed with Brandis and Bunsen, with the latter of whom he soon formed an intimate friendship, was chiefly confined to Germans and English, though he had likewise several acquaintances among the French. Among the Italians there were very few whose conversation afforded him any pleasure, owing to their entirely opposite cast of mind, though there were a few of the higher ecclesiastics who formed exceptions. Niebuhr associated much with the young artists who were then studying in Rome, and laying the foundation of the present German school of historical painting. Among them he was particularly intimate with Cornelius, Platner, Overbeck, and the two Schadows. He made their acquaintance on the anniversary of the battle of Leipsic, eight days after his arrival. The artists celebrated the day by a dinner, to which they invited Niebuhr and Brandis. Niebuhr sat between Thorwaldsen and Cornelius, who

both instantly inspired him with the strongest interest, and he made an equally favourable impression on them. Niebuhr always took a lively interest in art, particularly in paintings, and his judgment was considered, by those most competent to form an opinion, remarkably correct, though he had no practical acquaintance with any branch of art.

Letters written in 1816.

CCX.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

MUNICH, *13th August*, 1816.

Gretchen has, I think, furnished you with the thread of our journey as far as Ratisbon. From Meiningen I sent you the history of our adventures and calamities on the road through the forest of Thuringia. We saw nothing of that town; it rained in torrents, and if the brother of our old Heim had not lived so near, I should not even have visited him. From him I heard that the duchy contains 54,000 inhabitants; not much could be said about its wealth; but the people help themselves through, which is, perhaps, what is most to be wished for. The weather cleared up as we started, and the valley of the Werra, through which we were hastening, on an excellent high road, appeared in all its beauty. The roads, from this neighbourhood till beyond Wurzburg, were extremely good; they seemed to be made of the basalt of the hills near Wurzburg and Fulda. The little towns in the Wurzburg district are not pretty, though they are probably more prosperous than those on the Saal, as the land is very fertile and rich. The country is beautiful, and thickly dotted with villages of some size. At Wurzburg we stopped for twenty-four hours. This city is certainly very well situated; part of it lies on the opposite side of the river, at the foot of the hill, on which are the Marienburg, and a place of pilgrimage. This hill produces the Stein wine, and it

stretches so far into the country that it affords to a wide district the enjoyment of its delicious products, of which Brandis and I partook. The bridge is adorned, like that of Prague, with statues of saints, single and in groups; altogether Wurzburg swarms with Christian statues—all bad, all mannered, and tasteless. The cathedral is new, and so are the paintings, which are worthless; many of the buildings are large and handsome, and show that the city was once the seat of a Chapter composed of a proud and rich aristocracy. We—which, in such cases, always means Brandis and myself—hunted out Professor Goldmayer,—found him not at home; he had received my card, however, and came to me at the hotel. I found in him not merely courtesy, which is shown by what I have just said, but a simple, obliging, straightforward, upright man, with nothing unprotestant, that is, no stifling of his genuine German nature about him. This seems to be the case with the rest of the Wurzburg scholars, and their political ideas appear to be quite satisfactory. The librarian showed me what I wished to see, the MSS., among which are some of very great antiquity; one was of the kind for which I am looking out,* but the obliterated writing was nothing but an old Latin translation of the Bible, written probably in the fourth or fifth century. I wasted several hours, that evening and the following morning, in carefully looking over these works, to me quite useless. But I had pleasure in examining the works of art which I found among them, the exquisitely carved ivory tablets which ornament their covers, and must be at least as old as the eleventh century. They really must be regarded as specimens of alto-relievo, of which ancient art would not need to be ashamed. Copies from it they may be, for some of the figures are in unmistakeable Roman costume. Similar carvings are to be found among the illuminated MSS. of the Munich library, some with Greek, others with Latin inscriptions, the letters of which are so accurately formed that it is impossible to ascribe them to Constantinople.

* *i. e.* Palimpsests.

Our road brought us through a district where the different territories were formerly curiously intermingled, for the most part belonging to Bayreuth or Anspach, and I thought I could still distinctly recognise the difference of religion and of their former political relations. We caught sight at once of the whole extent of Nuremberg, with its castles and its high steeples. The city is much smaller than I had expected from its ancient population, which, calculating from 4,000 yearly births, must have amounted, in the fifteenth century, to more than 100,000 souls. It lies on hills. Nearly all the names of the streets have been changed since the change of the government. Two churches had been already pulled down because they wanted repairs; one was sold, as we heard, for five hundred florins, for the sake of its building materials. The price of houses is unusually low. A house for a family of the ordinary middle class may be had for five hundred florins; a very handsome one, which in Berlin would probably cost from sixty to eighty thousand dollars, may be had here for ten thousand florins. Yet the city appears by no means so empty and deserted as you might anticipate from this, and trade is reviving; orders have unexpectedly arrived from America. The debts of the city, amounting to 9,500,000 florins, have been made over to the Bavarian government, with a reduction of one half in the rate of interest. The municipal constitution has been quite abrogated; the city is governed by a royal commissioner; a town council has been nominated but it does not assemble. But the Bavarians have hopes, from the express words of a law promulgated last year, that, in the larger cities, magistrates will be again appointed, to whom the management of the fiscal matters of the communes, and even the administration of justice and the police, will be restored. Magistrates have been already conceded to the smaller towns. In consequence of all these changes the Town Hall is useless and empty, or, at least, appropriated to other purposes. The old decorations and emblems have been carried away; a screen of finely executed brass-work, which stood in the council-hall, has been sold, &c. Those churches, the

preservation of which seemed necessary for the wants of the city, have been suffered to keep their immense treasures of art untouched. You are not prepared to see so many sacred relics of antiquity in a Protestant city; the appearance of the place is quite Catholic; nay, to judge by the present state of the Catholic churches, it might be maintained that the works of art would have been far better preserved if the Reformation had become universal, supposing it to be carried out with as much moderation as at Nuremberg. St. Sebald's and St. Lawrence's have grown rich in old paintings through a custom which I never met with elsewhere; on the death of a citizen of consideration, a painting was hung up in the church to his memory, to which a tablet bearing the date of his death was affixed, but which had no other personal reference to the deceased, rarely even to his patron saint. These pictures are shockingly neglected; they are regarded as the property of the family who presented them to the church. There is one extremely beautiful painting in St. Lawrence's, ascribed, like everything else in Nuremberg of unknown origin, to Albert Durer, but it is much older. But the most beautiful painting of all was actually discovered by Brandis; it was painted before 1450, to judge by another picture near it, which is provided with a date. Brandis had climbed on to an old stone altar to look at another picture, also of great merit, when he suddenly became aware that there was one far superior, hanging on a column behind, of which you caught sight through an arch. To get near it we were obliged to send for the key of the clerestory,—it was worth the trouble. It is an altar picture with wings; in the background is Christ, very youthful, and with a crown on his head, engaged in crowning the Holy Virgin, who is also represented in very early youth. Its beauty is hardly to be surpassed. Of the works of Hans Kulmbach, hitherto an unknown artist to me, I could give you no account, unless I had written every day. There is a gallery in the castle, in two halls, which contains some very respectable and very ancient pictures, and some masterpieces by Michael Wohlgemuth. I never knew

what he really was till I came there. There are eight large figures of saints, which are splendid, all of course on a gold ground, the handling vigorous and delicate, the colouring brilliant. A Last Judgment of his leaves me scarcely a doubt that he was the painter of the Dantzic picture; nothing else can explain the likeness between the portrait figures. We could only see the very ancient imperial chapel, said to date from the Emperor Conrad, through a window. An old lime-tree stands in the court-yard, hollow, and scarcely to be called alive; the saying goes that it was planted by St. Cunigunda, the consort of Henry II., whose memory is still poetically preserved by monuments, not only in Nuremberg, but also in Bamberg, Merseburg, and Ratisbon. From the halls of this castle, I overlooked the country where Gustavus Adolphus was encamped within his lines, in the summer of 1632; Wallenstein was opposite to him; I could trace the circuit of the lines of the great Swedish monarch; a large portion of them is still existing. The Frauenholz collection at the Town Hall, which is brought together for sale, contains some magnificent things. There I saw for the first time an important work of Martin Schoen. I also visited the town library with Brandis; but there was nothing of value in the whole collection of MSS.; the most interesting thing was a globe on which Cuba is represented as a continent, and there is a greater confusion in the northern part of Europe, that is, in Norway and Sweden, than in our maps of America a hundred years ago. Among the people whom I saw in Nuremberg, where the Museum renders it very easy to see people and hear them speak, the most attractive and important to me was Seebeck, Goethe's friend and fellow-labourer in optics. Hegel was not at home when I called, but immediately returned my visit, and staid a long time. To *you*, dear Dora, I may venture to say,—and you will see no danger in it for me—that I have met universally with a very distinguished reception. This does not make me vain; it humbles me; I often say myself, they might spare their trouble; they only see my corpse and ghost. Twenty years ago, when older men made me feel my distance,

they did me wrong; I was conscious that I had something in me which merited affection and welcome. Nay even I might have felt this but a few years ago deeply! We ought to have spent at least another day in Nuremberg; there was yet much to see, and I was still quite unacquainted with the citizens, who have retained somewhat of their former remarkable character; it would have been amusing too to have seen with our own eyes the relics of the Guild of the Master-Singers and of the Fruit-bearing Society.* We left on Sunday afternoon. We slept at Neumarkt, where the Archduke Charles first defeated the French in 1796. As we did not expect to find the means of conveyance always ready, we had sent a circular to the post-masters as far as Ratisbon—a very unnecessary precaution, and here, it seems, a very unusual one, except with persons of high rank. In Neumarkt, when we drove up to the post-house, (in Franconia and Bavaria it is usual to sleep at the post-houses,) we found everything in commotion, and the house full of lights; the landlady lighted us up stairs, offered us a ready-prepared supper, enumerated her wines, which after all turned out not very good; but the beds were arranged and decked in the best style. Müller remarked, but we did not know it till after our departure, that on the door of our room was written in white chalk, "For their Royal Highnesses;" and the landlady asked the next morning when she knocked at our door, (we did not hear it), "Are your Royal Highnesses still asleep? Then everything shall be quiet in the house." Neumarkt is not a bad-looking little place. The Upper Palatinate is moderately fertile. Towards Ratisbon, on approaching the Nab, the scenery becomes picturesque, and the view from the heights, where you first catch sight of Ratisbon and the Danube, is glorious. The whole country, on both sides of the river, is full of historical associations of the years since 1809, with the heights above

* This society was founded in 1617, for promoting the purity of the German language. At their meetings the members of the society laid aside their own names, and took that of some plant, or fruit. It was open to men of all ranks, but always had some sovereign prince at its head. It lasted sixty-three years.

Hof whence the Austrians were obliged to set that unhappy town on fire with their shot in order to cover their retreat, and southwards the walls and fields in the neighbourhood. I had not expected to see Hof so completely rebuilt! I have already written to you about its noble bridge, and the incomparable view we had from our windows. The second pride of the old city is her cathedral, and in particular its most original, rich, and splendid façade. It is imperfect, and the interior is interesting only from its beautiful architecture. A strange tradition, which the sacristan told us, but which we had already heard from a working man, says, that a pupil of the master who built the cathedral, constructed the bridge in league with Satan; hence he had finished his work the first, in despair at which, the master threw himself from one of the pinnacles of the church. Ratisbon has not a very ancient appearance, which may be explained from the circumstance that, for the last 150 years, the ambassadors were the chief persons in the city, and though they were not permitted to possess any houses in their own name, they bought and built under the name of some other person. The old corporation was quite Lutheran; this fact, in the midst of Bavaria, and where the majority of the inhabitants are Catholics, is a very curious historical phenomenon, which I confess ought not to be an enigma to me, as its solution must be to be found in history. The once noble library of St. Emmeran, and even the town library, have lost their MSS., which have been brought here. Had I been aware of this, and believed the assertion that we could reach Landshut in eight hours, I should have remained there only one day. From Ratisbon, passing over the battle-field of Eckmülh, you enter a very rich country; the roads are the most beautiful in the world, and they ought not to be otherwise, for in all Bavaria, south of the Danube, the gravel is inexhaustible, and everywhere close at hand, so that it only needs to be dug up; it is nowhere necessary to break stones as in other countries. Still the country cannot be called beautiful, except in the neighbourhood of Landshut. At Freysing there are some beautiful

meadows by the water, which seem to be kept with great care, but from thence to Munich it is a steppe without trees. We reached Landshut too early to make it a halting-place, and arrived in Munich the following day at noon. Travelling here is incredibly rapid. It was the 8th of August on which we arrived.

I will not begin here to tell you about Munich. We go to the Jacobi's every day. Schelling is not here, but in the country, working at the "Ages of the World." . . . .

CCXI.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

MUNICH, 17*th August*, 1816.

I have written to you twice on my journey, my dear friend; the first letter from Erfurt has, no doubt, been punctually forwarded, because I informed the postmaster that, among other things, I had represented his complaints of the badness of the roads; the second, from Nuremberg, a mere note, has most likely also reached you, as it was entrusted to the care of a friend. Since both contained things requiring an answer, and you are as exemplarily conscientious about correspondence as I am hardened in sin, (at least, often seem so,) I almost fear that your reply has been stranded somewhere, which would be a bad beginning for my exile.

We have travelled very slowly. We were obliged to go round by Gotha, because we knew that the route by Coburg was quite impassable, and did not know that there was a road through Kahla and Schleiz, which certainly could not be worse than the one we have chosen, with a circuit of not less than from twelve to fifteen German miles. We staid one day at Wurzburg, two at Nuremberg (unhappily not longer), one and a half at Ratisbon. We arrived here ten days ago, and have been prevailed upon by Jacobi's kind entreaties to stay longer than we had intended; so we shall not start again till the day after to-morrow.

I go hence southwards with a heavy heart on all accounts.

In all human probability, I shall never return along this road; and even if cheerfulness be not to me a treasure irrecoverably lost, I could not look back with cheerfulness from the summits of the Alps upon my poor Germany. Tranquil as every thing seems here, the various rumours of warlike preparations, which appear in the newspapers, renew the feelings I have before experienced on the eve of the outbreak of storms in the political world. I sigh for peace, and cannot think of the possibility of its disturbance without inexpressible repugnance; so much so, that I grow indignant, or at least vexed, with the "Allgemeine Zeitung," and other circulators of these reports, innocently as they may have related what they have heard. If these fears accompany me to Italy, what will become of my enjoyment of antiquity and of the country?

Another reason of the sadness with which I quit Munich is the parting with Jacobi; we are certainly parting for the last time. It is not easy to describe his state to you as vividly as I could wish. His heart is still young; his intellect is only occasionally such as we have known it formerly. He is more inclined to narrate than to pour forth fresh thoughts, as he used to do; but his judgment is still acute and unwarped when subjects are presented clearly before his mind. He himself is evidently sensible that his life is an after-summer, when the unclouded sun only shines warmly during the noon-tide hours, and can call no new vegetation into life; and he feels this with a melancholy which is more touching to his younger friend than to himself. Roth is invaluable to him as a companion and inseparable friend; he does more than enliven Jacobi's existence, he is essential to it; he deserves the warmest thanks of all Jacobi's friends for his faithful and indefatigable endeavours to entertain him, and make up for the partial loss of sight by reading aloud, &c. I find the sisters unaltered. But their society would not supply sufficient materials for his mental life, to keep him tolerably happy; and without Roth I do not know how he could get on at all here, as much that is new, and rich in significance to me, and

in which I could find sufficient materials of enjoyment, must be quite indifferent to him.

If there is the least truth in the common saying, you must all have had as great a ringing in your ears for the last few days as if we had been constantly touching the most sonorous English glasses to your health. . . . .

My stay here has done me a great deal of good. The spiritual magnetism whose power I have often experienced, but to which I thought I had lost all susceptibility, has exerted itself once more, and the state of soul-sickness from which I have so long suffered is much relieved. . . . .

I have everywhere met with the most friendly and courteous reception, and could have staid some time longer here with pleasure. I have been much interested by several persons whose acquaintance I have made, as well as by the immensely rich scientific and artistic collections. Director Naumayer, to whom I was introduced at Jacobi's, a man who has perhaps never crossed the frontiers of his native country, seems to me one of the most worthy and intelligent men I have ever seen. I have got some very instructive details, from intelligent Catholics residing here, about the convents and their church. Sailer* himself said, at Landshut, the convents must have gone to ruin, even if they had not been suppressed; and a very ingenuous young man gave us the sad history of his education in a Norbertine convent, such as makes me shudder when I recall it. The reading of a German book, Gellert's Fables in the "casus in terminis," was punished with stripes by virtue of a law recently introduced.

I am told that here likewise, among the youth, there is a mysticising, well-meaning, but very wrong-headed party forming. I saw the superb collection of casts in company with one of these young men, among the rest the Colossus

* He was at this time professor at the University at Landshut, but was afterwards made a bishop. His truly evangelical piety and tolerance towards Protestants caused him to be looked upon as half a heretic himself, for many years. His simplicity of character, and genuine child-like piety interested Niebuhr deeply.

of Monte Cavallo, which is shown here in a new building, with the advantage of varied artificial lights. After a long silence, my companion covered his eyes with his hands, and exclaimed quite seriously, "To me that is horrible." "Horrible?" I asked; "I should have said magnificent." "Horrible," he continued, "I seem to see the very incarnation of the spirit of heathenism." Now, as I have no such horror of this kind of heathenism, I feel angry with such vagaries, which are only fit to stand in De Groot's Annual. Our age knows nothing but reactions and leaps from one extrême to another. Among such people Winkelman is regarded as a fool.

Travellers, who have lived some time at Rome, tell me I shall be able to hire a furnished house there without difficulty. I am very glad of this, as I shall thus be able to settle myself gradually, without going to too great an expense the first year. As this is the case, I shall give up going round by Leghorn, and thus gain time either for the journey or to arrive the sooner in Rome.

Be so kind, dear Nicolovius, as to give my best remembrances to Savigny and all other friends. I wish we had some little certainty of our letters reaching their destination. I have heard here that at least a third of the correspondence to Italy through the ——* post offices is suppressed.

Tell Savigny, too, that I no longer despair of continuing my History. I am reading Livy again on the journey, and have learnt to see many things in him that had escaped me previously. Why should I not also confess that the manner in which I have found my History read and known along the whole course of my journey, particularly in South Germany, has helped to stimulate me to resume it?

Gretchen sends her kind regards to you. Farewell, and maintain your friendship for me.

Your faithful NIEBUHR.

* Austrian.

CCXII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

MERAN IN THE VALLEY OF THE ADIGE.
26th August, 1816.

'We left Munich on the 19th. . . . . It is so cold here, that the people say there are not above five days in the year when they do not light a fire. Unfortunately we could gain no information at all as to the height of this district above the sea, but it certainly cannot be as high as Innspruck. These Bavarian mountaineers agree with the Tyrolese in asserting that the cold has much increased within the last few years. The lake here* was formerly always open in winter; for the last few years it has been completely frozen over every season; in the Tyrol the glaciers are enlarging, and the frost is gradually killing the Indian corn. The Tyrolese, however, do not consider the change for the worse as permanent, but as periodical; they say the glaciers grow during one seven years, and diminish during the next.

From the Wallensee to Mittenwald, the last Bavarian village, the road constantly ascends, passing through wild and barren tracts, where the Isar falls noisily down from rock to rock. The only thing that attracted me at Mittenwald was the churchyard. Instead of the grassy hillock at the foot of each cross,† there is an open black chest in the form of a coffin, and filled with earth. Flowers are planted in this earth, or scattered over it. On the boards at the side are inscriptions, for the most part in very bad verse, but full of feeling. . . .

The fortress in the Scharnitz lies in ruins, just as it was left after it was razed by Ney in 1805. It would be an exceedingly strong pass if the avenues to it were watched and guarded. The heaps of rubbish formed by the ruins of the old walls, the tokens and the effects of the dreadful havoc the war has made, in the shells of the burnt-down houses, the miserable poverty, the swarms of beggars, made

* The Wallensee.

† The cross which in Catholic countries is always placed at the head of each grave.

a most painful impression upon us, on our first entrance into long-expected Tyrol. We were equally disappointed at Seefeld, the first place where we stopped for the night. The devastations of the war were everywhere visible; the walls, indeed, are indestructible. The people of these parts are ugly. The whole scene changes as you descend the mountain towards the valley of the Inn. Clouds gathered and dispersed, adorning rather than concealing the view; and when a ravine opened towards the valley, and I caught sight of the mountains, in all their beauty, lying before us and around us, and the rich valley, with its magnificent stream, can you doubt that my first thought was of you and our Amelia? You have to drive in a zig-zag, with the hind wheels locked, for at least an hour, from the top of the mountain down to Market Zirl, the first stage in the valley of the Inn. Here, too, the ravages of war were still frightfully visible. Brandis and I had descended on foot, and had made some acquaintances by the time the carriage came up. The people were very obliging and sociable, and told us their history; the son, who was now on the mountains hunting, had served as an officer in the war of insurrection; the old man showed us the places, one by one, where the enemy's soldiers had been shot down by the peasants in his house, and the marks of the balls; and gave us some account of his flight to the Alps with his family, and how his wife died there. From Zirl, the high road to Innspruck runs beneath the steep and lofty rock of the Martinswand, doubly celebrated, for the legend, that on its summit the Emperor Maximilian I. lost himself while hunting, and took refuge when exhausted in a cave (visible from the wood), from which an angel led him down; and for the story, that when the Tyrolese drove the Bavarians out of the country in 1703, they made a furious onslaught on their retreating foes at this spot, and would have slain the Elector Maximilian Emanuel, had not his general sacrificed his own life for him by assuming the place of honour, and thus deceiving the unerring marksmen. This valley of the Inn is a most favoured and lovely plain, with a level surface, and a rich and pro-

ductive soil, in the highest state of cultivation. Maize, or Indian corn, is everywhere cultivated, and considered the most profitable species of grain, for when the crop is good, a yoke of land, or 6000 square feet, will yield a harvest worth 150 florins.

The kindly courtesy of the Tyrolese was shown even in the behaviour of the men who asked for and examined our passports at the frontier. I can assure you, that among the many Tyrolese to whom I have spoken, I have not found one uncivil or immoderate in his demands; and I repeat this declaration once more, because some who have, in other respects, done justice to this noble people, still charge them with avarice. In more than one instance, where persons might certainly have thought a fee due to them, they have gone away without it, or taken it as a present; not one has either by words or looks murmured at receiving too little. Innspruck is pleasantly situated; the town is not large; it contains some six hundred houses, and ten thousand inhabitants. From our windows at the hotel, we looked out on the beautiful bridge, and the mountain range on the other side of the river. Hofer had occupied the same rooms when he entered the town for the first time. Hence the house contained many relics of him; he had presented the hostess with a horn snuff-box; some of his proclamations, accompanied by some not badly-drawn scenes from the great war, were framed and glazed, and hung round the room. As soon as we had dined, Brandis and I put ourselves under the guidance of a man who had served as a rifleman in the revolt from the very beginning, to visit and survey the hill Isel, which has been immortalized by three hard-fought combats in the principal epochs of the insurrection. Our guide was, as to station, what would be called a common man, and the influence of this would have made him a bad companion, if he had not belonged to a free people; but his conversation and manners were such, that we heartily congratulated ourselves upon his society. It seems to help these people to a correct and unembarrassed sense of their relation to a traveller, when they hear with

what profound veneration he speaks of the host of Sand,* who is the hero of their idolatry, but whose earlier life was passed in as humble a position as their own, and whose humility did not forsake him when he rose to be Regent of the whole country, for he never considered himself as the superior of any other Tyrolese peasant. From this guide I learnt at every spot what had happened there. He afterwards conducted me past the waterfall of Wiltau to the old castle of Amras, from whose turrets a wide prospect over the lovely valley and the lofty mountains, rewards the not inconsiderable labour of the ascent, though all the curiosities and treasures which it formerly contained have been either removed or are, like the picture-gallery, closed.

I suppose I need not tell you who Speckbacher is? Speckbacher's son was taken prisoner in the war, and educated in a division of the cadet school, because the King took an interest in him; for he is a boy of extraordinary talent, and his letters to his father are as beautiful in thought, and refined in language, as any youth of his age could write. We did not see the boy himself at Munich, but Brandis, who is indefatigable in profiting by every opportunity of seeing things and gaining information that the journey affords, applied to his tutor, and obtained from him a letter of introduction for us to the father. Equipped with this, we set out on Thursday, all three in a mountain car. Speckbacher lives at Rinn, in the mountains above Hall; the way thither is over almost impassable mountain roads. I send this letter off unfinished (from Trent), because the post is going out.

The narrative, which is here broken off, has been supplied to the translator verbally by Professor Brandis.

* Sand was the name of a little hamlet on the Brenner where Hofer was the innkeeper. He commonly went by the name of the *Sandwirth*, or host of Sand. Almost all the innkeepers had been officers in the war, and they were generally very intelligent men. Niebuhr always used to question them about the war, and received a great deal of valuable information from them, especially from the host at Pfunz, the pass between the Inn and Adige valleys, whom he found also well versed in the local history of the country.

Niebuhr and Brandis were obliged to leave the carriage at some distance from the house, so that Madame Niebuhr was not able to accompany them in their visit. When they knocked at the door, it was opened by a tall, spare, haggard-looking man, with flashing black eyes and aquiline features, who, in answer to their inquiries, replied that he was Speckbacher himself, and begged to know who his visitors were. When Niebuhr told him that he was the ambassador from Prussia to Rome, the astonishment of the simple peasant was extreme, that such grand personages should have come out of their way to visit him, and he was about to kiss Niebuhr's hand, but Niebuhr drew it back, exclaiming, "No, it is I who ought to kiss your hand," fell on his neck and embraced him, and they were friends directly. Speckbacher began to make apologies that he could give them no better entertainment; his wife and daughters were out reaping, and he was alone in the house, and had nothing to set before his honoured guests. "Never mind, we only want to see you; sit down and tell us about the war." He then related the events in which he had been engaged; and took them out to show them the stable where he had been concealed by his faithful servant, Zoppel, for more than a month, in a hole dug in the ground and covered with hay. After the peace of Vienna* he fled to the mountains, and was for a long time concealed in a cavern among snow and ice, but at length the winter became too severe, and he left his hiding-place and took refuge in the stable of his own house, where he remained while the enemy were searching for him in every direction, and a considerable number of Bavarian soldiers were actually quartered in his house. Not even his wife knew of his being in the neighbourhood. Zoppel could only bring him food at night, and sometimes not even then, when there were soldiers about.

During the struggle, he sent his wife and children up the mountains for safety. His eldest child, a boy of ten years old, could not be induced to stay quietly there, but after several ineffectual attempts succeeded in reaching his father. When

* By which on the 14th of Oct., 1809, the Austrians ceded the Tyrol to Bavaria.

Speckbacher found that it was impossible to persuade the boy to go back again, he agreed to keep him with him. In the last battle fought before the peace of Vienna, Speckbacher was defeated, and escaped with difficulty; his boy was separated from him, and taken prisoner by the Bavarians. When they asked him where his father was, the child undauntedly replied, in the Tyrolese patois,—"Boer Ferkel schiesse." (Gone to shoot the Bavarian pigs.)

To the disgrace of the Austrian government, the only reward Speckbacher received for his services was the rank of a major in the militia, to which a small pension was attached. It was proposed to send him an order, but even this was prevented by the court party, who could not endure that a peasant should be thus distinguished. The Emperor sent him, instead, a large gold medal, which Speckbacher showed with great delight to Niebuhr, exclaiming, "See how gracious the Emperor has been to me!" Niebuhr had to bite his lips to repress his indignation that this should be the sole honour this heroic patriot had to exhibit, but Speckbacher himself was perfectly contented. He had only one wish ungratified, namely, to receive a rosary that had been blessed by Pope Pius VII. He had written to Vienna to make this request, but "it was very natural," he said, "that those great lords should have had no time to attend to a request from an insignificant peasant like him, and he had never received any answer."

The first business Niebuhr transacted with the Pope was to lay Speckbacher's wish before him, and, in a few days after his arrival in Rome, he had the pleasure of forwarding to Speckbacher a splendid rosary, as a gift from his Holiness. Speckbacher returned a letter of thanks to the Pope, together with his portrait, painted by another peasant, a most frightful thing.

One of the interesting personages the Niebuhrs met with at Innspruck, was an old fruitwoman who kept a stall in the street. In the war she had sold all her goods, bought provisions, and followed the army, supplying the soldiers for nothing as long as her means held out, when, as was frequently

the case, they were unable to pay. Madame Niebuhr was so touched by her tale, that she took off a gold necklace and hung it round the old woman's neck as a keepsake.

In travelling along the valley of the Lower Inn, in the neighbourhood of Landsberg, they came to a pass, where the Tyrolese who were coming to attack Innspruck, had stopped the Bavarian troops, by means of a singular contrivance. The road was overhung by rugged mountains; the Tyrolese had dislodged huge masses of rock, which they bound together with ropes so as to keep them from rolling down; they held the ropes tightly in silence till the first company of Bavarians was immediately below them, when, exclaiming "In the name of the Holy Trinity!" all loosed their hold, and the ponderous missiles rushed down on the heads of the soldiers beneath, crushing nearly a whole company, and effectually barring the road for those who followed, while the Tyrolese descended the hill-side with their guns, and shot them down from behind trees and rocks till few of them remained.

CCXIII.

TO SAVIGNY.

VENICE, *4th September*, 1816.

Except at some rare seasons of cheerfulness and mental activity, it has always been a peculiarity of my first letters to my friends after taking leave of them, that a considerable portion of space is occupied with an apologetic explanation of my delay in writing; and this firstling of my correspondence with you, will form no exception to the rule. However, I will restrict myself to informing you, that I am quite aware I owe you such an apology, and if you will forgive me without requiring it at my hands, it will be an act of generosity on your part. As, even amidst the wonders of this magnificent city, my mind is not bright and unclouded enough to allow me to write playfully, and yet I do not like to relate in a grave tone the ideas which occurred to me in a merry mood, I have felt as if I had no right to appear before you with a letter, till I had some discovery in the

shape of a juridical "ineditum" to present you with. But I hasten, at all events, to satisfy the curiosity which the sight of the uncial letters on the enclosed sheets, will probably have excited in you the moment you opened this letter; particularly as these enclosures are the reason for my taking advantage of the earliest opportunity to write to you from this place.

The Cathedral of Verona possesses a library extremely rich in very old Latin parchments. Fortunately for it, about the middle of the eighteenth century, a thoroughly learned prebendary—a rare phenomenon even there—Gian Jacopo de Dionigi by name,—examined and arranged the whole of its contents; and some time after, Antonio Mazzotti, a very honest and industrious librarian, made an excellent catalogue of them. This catalogue, however, has not helped me to my discovery, concerning the subject of which, it does not contain a syllable. The first thing that fell into my hands, on opening the chest containing the manuscripts, was a very thin little volume of extremely ancient single and double leaves of parchment, which, according to the title page, were collected from among dirt and rubbish by the said Dionigi in 1758. Most of them are biblical fragments, from perhaps the sixth to the eleventh century, and a note, by the hand of their diligent collector, exhibits their contents. But almost instantly I espied among them two fragments of quite a different kind, whose nature he did not understand, and of which he has therefore omitted all notice.* . . . . I have only copied this fragment that nothing might be overlooked. But now comes the main piece of news I have to announce to you: namely, that there is preserved at Verona, as much of Ulpian as would fill a small octavo volume; of which, however, I was only able to copy a single leaf by way of a specimen and attestation, which I herewith transmit to you for publication.

I had already begun when at Wurzburg, to look out for palimpsests, and had hit upon one there almost immediately (which Ogg has described); but it only consisted of fragments

* Here follows a description of the fragments.

from the "Itala." At Munich I looked through all the old Latin parchments, and could only detect among them a single palimpsest: that, too, was merely a biblical text, under St. Jerome and Gennadius "De Vitis." At Verona my lucky star was again in the ascendant, for I found the Codex 13, containing the Epistles of St. Jerome,—a pretty thick quarto volume of the ninth century, which is a complete palimpsest, except about a fifth part of the leaves, which are new. Some of the part written over is of a theological, but by far the greater portion of a juridical nature. It is written by the same hand as the fragment of Gaius, from which we may conclude that the cathedral chapter, or the church at Verona, was once in possession of several works on jurisprudence, which the ecclesiastics afterwards used up; and that it had these books before Justinian's time, and under King Theodoric. My transcript is as exact a representation of the original as it was possible to make, without tracing it through transparent paper. Single words here and there, of a yellowish colour, could be made out where the lines did not exactly coincide, from which the nature of the contents could be gathered, but it would be impossible to make anything of it without the aid of chemistry. The best re-agents were not to be procured at Verona. I was obliged hastily to prepare for myself an infusion of gall-nuts, which, imperfect as it was, produced so much effect as to allow us to hope for full success with better means.

Now, dear Savigny, here lies a treasure waiting for your hand to dig it up; a bait that shall lure you over the Alps to us. Or will you give the necessary instructions to Cramer that he may set to work? Or will you persuade some one else to come?

You will never suffer this discovery, which is exactly what you have been wishing for so ardently, to be lost for want of some one to make use of it. But whoever comes, let him not depend merely upon his own eyes. Let him bring with him the best chemical re-agents to bring out the writing, and also a good magnifying glass. Now I think I fairly deserve

your best wishes, that I may discover something for myself also. There is nothing here in the library of St. Mark. The republic had no library before Bessarion's time, and this Greek collected no ancient Latin manuscripts; the oldest is of the eleventh century. Of Justinian's works on jurisprudence, Verona possesses only the Code with a new gloss. I will write you word of all I meet with here another time.

And now I hand over to you the raw materials that I have collected. If you publish my transcripts, I only bind you to this, that you do not give them to the world without your notes and explanations. Make such extracts from this letter as may be advisable; to which I must add, that the obliging way in which the prebendaries permitted the library to be opened for me, deserves the highest praise; and also the patience of the Custos Archiprète Eucherio, who, with the greatest kindness, gave up his mornings and evenings to me whenever I desired it. If you put the affair into your Journal, let there be twenty extra copies printed, and I will let you know hereafter what is to be done with them. I cannot tell you anything about the journey to-day, for ar Albanian from Scutari, whose acquaintance I have made, will be waiting for me in the Turkish coffee-house. A Greek is our guest to-day at dinner. Thus immeasurably, almost oppressively, rich in objects of interest do I find the progress of our journey, but my mind is veiled in deepest night. Gretchen often causes me great anxiety. She does not bear the travelling well, and can derive little enjoyment from it. . . . .

We had a delightful journey through the Austrian Tyrol. Your friend Salvotti received us very kindly. We both send our kindest regards to you and all our friends. I have written three times to Nicolovius. I beg you will address your next to me at Rome, for you must answer this letter, dear Savigny. Mai has made a fresh discovery, something from Dion. Halic.; it is not known here yet what it is, but it is said to be from the History; that would be in my way. Farewell, my dear friend, and remember me.

PS. The fragments of Dion. Halic. have come to nothing. They are excerpts from some other historian, that hardly contain a single new fact. I will make a report upon them shortly to the Academy. Here there is nothing to be found except a leaf from a MS. of the Code of the eleventh century, with inscription and subscription. I have collated them for you. The variations are considerable. To-morrow we go to Padua. Yet once more farewell, dearest friend. Have mercy and write!

CCXIV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

FLORENCE, *24th September*, 1816.

I have not even been able to write a diary for you, during my journey. I will now tell you a few facts of a general nature. My preconceived opinion of the scholars and higher classes in Italy has proved perfectly correct, as I was convinced would be the case, because I possessed sufficient data to form an accurate idea of them. I have always allowed the existence of individual exceptions as regards erudition, but, even in these cases, there is not that cultivation of the whole man which we demand and deem indispensable. I have become acquainted with two or three literary men of real ability; but, in the first place, they are old men, who have only a few years longer to live, and, when they are gone, Italy will be, as they say themselves, in a state of barbarism; and, in the second, they are like statues wrought to be placed in a frieze on the wall; the side turned towards you is of finished beauty, the other, unhewn stone. They are much what our scholars may have been sixty or eighty years ago. No one feels himself a citizen. Not only are the people destitute of hope, they have not even wishes respecting the affairs of the world, except as they concern their several cabinets; and all the springs of great and noble thoughts and feelings are choked up. I have met with one noble-minded and agreeable young man, who unites depth of feeling and profound melancholy about the state of the

world, with a very poetical mind, and a considerable amount of scholarship, though not such as would come up to our standard. He is not, however, a native of Italy, but a Greek from Corfu. He has promised to come to Rome, and a visit from him would be worth much to me.

The three genuine and intellectual scholars of my acquaintance, Morelli, Garatoni, and Fontana, are all ecclesiastics; they are, however, only ecclesiastics by profession; for I have not found in them the slightest trace either of a belief in the dogmas of Catholicism, or of the pietism which you meet with in Germany. When an Italian has once ceased to be a slave of the Church, he never seems to trouble his head about such matters at all. Metaphysical speculations are utterly foreign to his nature, as they were to the old Romans. Hence the vacuity of mind which has become general since the suppression of freedom, except in the case of those who find a sphere of action in writing literary and historical memoirs. Their public men are immeasurably behind the Germans in knowledge and cultivation. Perhaps there may be more of this found, here and there, among the advocates, but the physical philosophers are the most reflective class. In Rome, it is solely among the clergy that I expect to find men with whom I can hold intercourse.

The common people are, on the whole, better than I expected. At Padua and Venice you cannot help feeling a real attachment for them, and for the burghers; they are earnest, honest, and intelligent, indeed even kind. Their soft and graceful dialect, warm and caressing, makes it a pleasure to talk to them. The lowest Venetian is polite and decorous. In this respect, as in others, there is as great a difference between the Italian towns as if they were inhabited by different races. The shameless rapacity of the innkeepers and postilions is disgusting; and it is very unpleasant to be obliged to beat down all the tradespeople, not excepting the booksellers. But they are rather avaricious than deceitful in their dealings. The day before yesterday, I went with Brandis to visit the ancient Fiesole, situated on the hill about half a German mile from hence;

the peasants there did not differ in their manners from Germans, and did not even seem to expect money from us. . . . .

"As I anticipated, I certainly see and inquire into much that other travellers have not seen or inquired into; but, on this very account, I have seen less than most, of what every one sees. About the landed interest, tenure of land, husbandry, the right of boundaries, I have already learnt much that will be of great use in my researches into antiquity; and therefore, as I am only just beginning my inquiries on these subjects, I hope to obtain rich spoils. It also contributes greatly to a vivid conception of historical events, when you can survey their scene for yourself, and, if you can traverse it frequently in different directions, you cannot but gain very important assistance. I am indefatigable in making inquiries of all kinds, and shall continue to be so. But one cannot help feeling indignant with those who visited this land twenty or thirty years ago, for it is incredible how many relics of antiquity have been lost or destroyed since then. Still, there are a thousand traces of past ages to be found if you look for them; there are very many connected with husbandry. The stone coffins at Verona, of the middle ages, are quite Etruscan in their form. I have found, in an old Etruscan temple wall that has been dug up at Fiesole, a similar style of dressing the stones to that of the exterior walls of the Florentine palaces of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. (The peasants of Fiesole can distinguish perfectly between Roman and Etruscan masonry.)

"Be assured that I shall not forget the work to which I feel myself most sacredly pledged; but, to enrich my store of materials for it, I must often turn aside into by-ways and examine every path that presents itself. Besides, a residence in a foreign country involves the necessity of making myself thoroughly acquainted with its language and literature, and attempting to gain an accurate knowledge of its topography. Here again, I feel how greatly my memory has suffered, how much escapes me nowadays. It used to be an amazing

assistance to my memory that I repeated everything I read or thought to my Milly, who received it with interest and life, and presented it again to me in new points of view.

It will take some time for my constitution to adapt itself to the climate. I have many inconveniences to suffer; I cannot drink the wines, and am always catching cold. But Gretchen suffers far more. She was very well till we got to Erfurt, but from thence onwards she has been constantly getting worse. At Munich she revived, but as we came along the valley of the Adige, towards the south, she grew more and more indisposed. Her eyes are also very weak. She derives scarcely any pleasure from the journey, because she is obliged to sit so much alone, (and now ill,) at home; but she bears this with touching gentleness and resignation.

We hear news from Rome of the rise of prices of all kinds, especially in the rent of furnished apartments, occasioned by the concourse of foreigners, so that we shall most likely be obliged to furnish next spring. The ship, in which our goods were embarked, has been wrecked at Calais. Under the best circumstances, it will be long before we receive any of our things.

I have already seen a great deal of the works of art here. My preference for the old masters, up to the time of Raphael, has been decidedly confirmed. Giovanni Bellini, who was my favourite eight years ago, has become so again at Venice. And we have seen also some really wonderful productions of Francia at Bologna. Masaccio, Mantegna, Vivarini, and Carpaccio, can be studied only in Italy. Of Giotto's works I have already seen a great number, and have now got a complete idea of the history of art in Italy. The direction of our journey by way of Nuremberg and Munich has been of great advantage to me in this respect. In the fourteenth century Giotto leans to the antique; his school departs from it again. Masaccio soars at once on high. After him art sinks again; and, during the first sixty years of the fifteenth century, the Germans stand high above the Italians. Then the other scale descends. After the time of Raphael

and Durer, the *spirit* was dead on both sides of the Alps; but the *art* survived in Italy. In architecture, the Italians of the middle ages are not to be compared to the Germans. In the plastic arts they excel them.

The day after to-morrow we proceed on our journey. When we arrive in Rome depends on circumstances. If I should find any thing in the Chapter libraries of Arezzo and Perugia, I shall halt there. But, at all events, we shall certainly be at Rome long before the answer to this letter can arrive. Do not deny me this refreshment. Our love to all our relations and friends. Farewell! God bless you!

CCXV.

ROME, *7th October*, 1816.

. . . . It was with solemn feelings that this morning, from the barren heights of the moory Campagna, I caught sight first of the cupola of St. Peter's, and then of the view of the city from the bridge, where all the majesty of her buildings and her history seems to lie spread out before the eye of the stranger; and afterwards entered by the Porta del Popolo. I have already wandered through a part of the city, and visited the most famous of the ruins. My presentiment of the emotions with which I should behold them has proved quite correct. Nothing about them is new to me; as a child I lay so often, for hours together, before the pictures I gave you as a keepsake, that their images were even at that early time as distinctly impressed upon my mind as if I had actually seen them: then, besides, it repels me that all the remains are those of the imperial times, and it is impossible for an architectural work of art to speak to the feelings, if considered as isolated, and without connexion with other ideas. But the influence of the completely modern part of all that here surrounds you, and intrudes itself upon your attention, is most disturbing; the glaringly bad taste of the churches of the last two hundred and fifty years; the utter want of solemnity in all that meets the eye. In Petrarch's time, all must have made a profound impression of grandeur and

magnificence on those who were susceptible to it; indeed, much that but a short time since spoke to the sense of poetry, has now been destroyed by the clearing out of the rubbish from the Forum and the Colosseum. Now, their walls and columns stand stripped and naked, corroded by time, despoiled of the luxuriant and wild vegetation which once flourished among the ruined stones. The extent of Rome, too, appears small to a traveller; still, the distance from the Vatican, where I hope to find my chief pleasures, must be further than from the last house which Milly and I occupied, to the Königsthor at Berlin, which, in rain and the hot sun, is not an agreeable prospect. This library is closed now, and will remain so for the whole of this month, so that I must school myself into patience. In Florence, however, I attained a high degree of probability that the Greek poet—in the possibility of finding whom I have always believed for the last five-and-twenty years—really exists there, and has only failed to attract notice owing to the carelessness of those into whose hands he has fallen. If this treasure should really be reserved for me I shall not have come hither in vain.

. . . . But when one sees this favoured land, to which our most fruitful districts are barren; sees how, at Terni, two harvests of grain are reaped from the soil in one year,—one of wheat in June, and the maize soon after it in October; how this goes on year after year, and the wheat yields fifteen fold; when one sees how there is, strictly speaking, no peasant class at all here; how the very happiest places are those where the peasant only has to give up half the produce, and not where, as for many miles round Rome, all husbandry is performed by day-labourers under the enormously rich nobles; when you see the swarms of beggars who assure you, with looks that bear witness to their assertions, that they have not tasted bread to-day; when you hear what numbers have died of hunger;* it does indeed raise bitter feelings. It

* It ought to be noticed, that the year in which Niebuhr went to Italy was a famine year, and that this operated greatly in heightening the unfavourable character of Niebuhr's first impressions of the country in general, though his opinion of the moral and intellectual condition of the higher classes remained

has become perfectly clear to me how this misery arose in the imperial times, and has been rendered permanent by the German conquerors, who have in no respect made themselves benefactors to Italy.

CCXVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 17*th October*, 1816.

If a letter which I wrote you from Venice arrived punctually, dear Savigny, (of which, however, I do not feel at all confident,) and found you at Berlin, I am certain that you must have written to me; for my discoveries at Verona were, I should think, almost enough to induce you to order post-horses on the spot, and set out for Italy yourself; and I conjured and supplicated you to let me hear from you.

Just now, however, I will neither torment myself because the wished-for letter seems to loiter on the road—although it would be doubly painful to me if my packet and its enclosures should not have come to hand—nor yet postpone this second letter till I know something certain about it.

We arrived in Rome ten days ago, and removed, the day before yesterday, into the apartments which we have taken for the winter; the innumerable calls are over except a few, and we have made our acquaintance in the circle of my official intercourse. We are now able to survey our position and prospects. Do not make an outcry when I say that these are anything but agreeable; and beg others who may hear this from you, not to do so either. Were I a young man of twenty or thirty, coming hither as an independent traveller, with a mind free from care, and the prospect of returning home sooner or later, perhaps I should find this place to my liking, though I would not take my oath of it. But now,

unchanged. Professor Brandis related to the translator, how at Vicenza they were positively driven out of the amphitheatre by the crowd of beggars that surrounded them, and at Venice were unable to sleep at all the first night, from the cries and shrieks of the starving crowd assembled under their windows and calling for bread.

what is permanent presses me down with its leaden weight, and what is transitory has no charms for me. Only one utterly unacquainted with facts could suppose, that the life of an ambassador here in Rome could be free from restraint and interruption; but it were really a pardonable mistake to imagine it somewhat less fettered than it is; for that, as such, I should be obliged to observe all courtly formalities towards the Spanish court of Charles IV., of the Queen, and the Prince of the Peace, and even to the Queen of Etruria, I confess I did not dream; but so it is. I foresaw, of course, that I must unavoidably hold frequent intercourse with my colleagues, and gradually learn to adapt my conduct to the claims and dictates of their opinions. Then for any foreigner, except a single man living independently of others, Rome has become extravagantly, nay frightfully, dear. Furniture is only to be procured at this moment at quite unreasonable prices, and we have been thankful to hire a very small suite of furnished apartments for the winter, at fifty scudi a month. We have not yet engaged a cook; one has applied, and asks eighteen scudi a month wages, and two scudi (nearly three thalers) a day for providing dinner for us three, with Müller and himself. Without a written agreement, nothing can be done. A hired carriage costs at least sixty-five scudi a month. The extra charges for lights, drink-money, &c., are endless. Do not, however, ascribe it to the influence of these unpleasing prospects, or of my vexation at foreseeing how miserably the time I need for the completion of a work which was begun, and can only be continued in quiet and retirement, will have to be frittered away, when I further confess to you that the sight of Rome has by no means made a cheering or elevating impression upon me. This it cannot have on any one who really sees what really exists.

The aspect of Venice and Florence appeared to me grand and pleasing; in both, the images and monuments of the times of their greatness still remain visible and tangible. Venice is to me the grandest thing I have ever seen, and I liked everything connected with it. Its inhabitants pleased

me too; their manners are mild and noble, and they have all an expression of grave, quiet sadness, that spoke to my inmost heart. In Florence every street is historical, and so are hundreds of the buildings. I have traced the circuit of the Roman colony, and of the walls after their extension, step by step; visited Dante's house; read manuscripts written by Machiavelli and Benvenuto Cellini; seen the tombs in Santa Croce and San Lorenzo. In both these cities there still exist unbounded treasures of genuine art, *i. e.* up to Raphael's death. Rome has no right to its name; at most it should only be called New Rome (like New York). Not one single street here goes in the same direction as the old one; it is an entirely foreign vegetation that has grown up on a part of the old soil, as insignificant and thoroughly modern in its style as possible, without nationality, without history; it is very characteristic, that the really ancient, and the modern city lie almost side by side. The abominable rage for building in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has called into existence a multitude of churches and edifices which any unprejudiced observer must allow to be mean and tasteless, and removed or built up every ancient structure.

There are nowhere any remains of any thing that it was possible to remove. The ruins all date from the times of the Emperors, and he who can get up an enthusiasm about them, must at least rank Martial and Sophocles together. In pictures, Rome (except the Vatican) is poor, compared to those two cities; Bolognese manufactures, and others still worse, I do not take into the account. St. Peter's, the Sixtine Chapel, and the Loggie are certainly splendid;* but even St. Peter's is disfigured internally by the wretched statues and decorations; and who, indeed, would deny that even Rome has its glories? The statues I must acquire a taste for by degrees; the doors of the Baptistry, particularly the ornamental work round their edges, which was not

* In another letter he says, "The Last Judgment I do not yet understand. The statues by Michael Angelo at Florence I prefer to those of antiquity. The Perseus of Benvenuto seems to me, on the contrary, mediocre."

designed by Ghiberti, but by Giotto, take my fancy more than all the bas-reliefs. Science is utterly extinct here; of philologists there is none worthy the name, except the aged de Rossi, who is near his end. The people are apathetic, and truly if they ever were remarkable in any way for personal appearance, they must have strangely altered. In all Italy (with a few exceptions at Venice) we have not seen one handsome face, most certainly not one here; but much more positive ugliness than in Germany. Moreover, what as yet seems to us quite unaccountable, there is nothing like song to be heard, either of human voices or birds' throats; only a horrible screeching every now and then.

This then is the country and the place in which my life is to be passed! It is but a poor amends that I can get from libraries, and yet my only hope is from the Vatican. That we may be crossed in every way, this is closed till the 5th of November, and to have it opened sooner is out of the question; in other respects, all possible facilities have been promised me by the Pope himself, Cardinal Gonsalvi, Monsignor Testa, and the Prefect of the Library, Monsignor Baldi: this last is now engaged in printing, at his own cost, a work on which he has expended 600 scudi, without hope of receiving any compensation for it. It is on seventeen passages in the Old Testament, in which he has found the cross mentioned by name. A manuscript collection of inscriptions has been bequeathed to the Vatican by Marini, which cannot be printed for want of funds. About that I shall write some day to the Academy. Should I find nothing in the Vatican, I shall be dreadfully disappointed. But I will still hope for something there. It is only open three hours a day, and shut on Thursdays and all the innumerable Catholic festivals; and it just now happens that our meetings for conference have been altered from Thursday to some other day, so that in general there will only be three days a week, at most, in which I can work there. Of living antiquities I can expect none at Rome, as all the estates are "latifundia," without peasants. At Terni I found the old art of land-surveying still extant; I rode along what was

probably an ancient "limes," found the "rigor" and the "V Pedes," and the coals and bricks under the "termini." Unfortunately there was no "acclimensore" in the town (as the people now call the occupation). I shall go there again if I live till next autumn. It is a charming place. There are at least fifty houses in the town—among them one very large—which date from the Roman times, and which have never yet been observed or described by any traveller.* Several of the churches are Roman private houses. If one could but discover in Rome anything like this! I long inexpressibly to have it for my burial-place. Everything is ancient in Terni and its neighbourhood; even the mode of preparing the wine. O to have been in Italy 500 years ago!

Since my own literary life is brought to a close with this mission, I endeavour at least to make myself useful to my friends, as far as it may still lie in my power. Your commissions, dear Savigny, have not escaped my memory. First at Bologna; Ridolfi has been removed thence to Padua, where I have twice been without knowing this. Your book has been forwarded to him through that philological miracle, Mezzofanti. The catalogue of documents I left with the Canon Londi, as it would have required full eight days merely to copy it. This Canon and Schiassi, the Keeper of the Archives, have promised to get a copy made for me. I obtained a similar promise at Florence from Villani and Bandini, on behalf of the Chapter; for as I made it my chief object there to examine the Laurentian library as thoroughly as possible for palimpsests (the search proved fruitless, as also in the Marcian library), time failed me there also. I had great difficulty in discovering the MSS. of Bologninus. They were found at last in a chest.

* There was, too, an old bridge at Terni, also of Roman architecture, which particularly interested Niebuhr.

CCXVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *30th October*, 1816.

It makes me very uneasy that I have still no answer from Savigny to my announcement of the discovery I made at Verona. The letters to me must be detained somewhere on the road, for you would never *all* keep silence to me and Gretchen in this manner.

It is extremely depressing while we can receive no sympathy in conversation, to be deprived of all communication by which my mind can be roused into life. I shall never be able to feel at home here. Anything from Germany, even a leaf from the "Allgemeine Zeitung" is the most welcome acquisition to me in this foreign land.

I have indeed some German fellow-countrymen here; but it is with them as I expected. Among the artists, the two whose conversation I find the most agreeable, are Cornelius and Wilhelm Schadow. The latter is particularly refined and intellectual; but he is unfortunately a convert to Catholicism. Overbeck, to whom he yields precedence as an artist, and whose physiognomy is very prepossessing, is taciturn and melancholy. Rome is a terrible place for any one who is melancholy, because it contains no living present to relieve the sense of sadness; the present is revolting, and in what exists, there is not the slightest trace of antiquity to be recognised; there are not even any remains of the Church of the middle ages. It does no good (to me especially) to be thrown back upon works of art and nothing but works of art. My colleagues are tolerably agreeable people. Among the Italians you seek in vain for even *interesting* conversation, although this would be far from sufficient for me now. There is only one man of talent and mental activity here, at least among the philologers and historians—an old ex-Jesuit on the borders of the grave; and he repeats the verdict which I have already heard from the lips of the few old men in whom I have become acquainted with the relics of a more intellectual

age; "l'Italia è spenta: è un corpo morto;" and I find it so. Cardinal Gonsalvi is an intellectual man, and would be really distinguished among any ministers of any court. I have found some intelligent men among the prelates, but we Germans and they find each other's society devoid of stimulating influence; many of our thoughts may be mirrored in each other's minds, but pass away, and exert no living power. The aged and venerable Pope received me with remarkable kindness and affability; I staid to dinner with his chaplain, and it was about the brightest day I have spent since my arrival. So far from there being any truth in the absurd rumour, that the court of Rome had protested against me personally, it turns out that they have looked forward to my coming with great pleasure, and certainly no Catholic ambassador can boast of a more distinguished and friendly reception. . . . .

It is a real misfortune that our goods, consequently my books, have not arrived yet. We are still without tidings of them, and the captain who could make shipwreck at Calais in the middle of summer, would need a miracle to get safely to Leghorn at this season. Besides, there are Barbary pirates cruising off the Portuguese coasts, who plunder every vessel they come near. I wish I had followed my own plan, and sent the books, at least, over land. If they are lost, it would be impossible to replace them in Italy. But I bow in resignation to every calamity of this kind. Only it is very sad that with them I should lose every means of study and employment, for no book is lent out of the libraries here under any conditions whatever; and so how can I undertake any learned work? The libraries are open five days a week, for three hours each day, and of these five days, two are those of the ministerial conferences. However, as I said, my murmuring spirit is broken; perhaps just because one only desires passionately when one is full of life. All other things may turn out as they will, if only God protect and preserve to me my dearest treasure. Farewell!

CCXVIII.

ROME, *20th November*, 1816.

. . . Brandis is a very agreeable inmate, and sympathises with me on every occasion.

I have found in the Vatican a manuscript full of treasures from the Roman literature, and am working busily at it. I have discovered fragments of the lost parts of Cicero's Oration for Fonteius, and probably also the conclusion of that for Tullius. I shall have these fragments printed here, together with some passages in the fragment of Livy which their first editors could not read, as soon as the indescribably laborious work is finished, in order that it may gain me access to more of the same kind. I think I can also recognise long passages from Cicero's lost philosophical writings; if I prove to be right, I should like to sell them in England for a good price, by way of earning some money for our young artists. Among these, there are some really excellent young men, who are languishing for the means of cultivating their talents, and are at the same time hard put to it for daily bread. I should like to get enough money to set a few of them to paint a fresco in the Library. Some of the ecclesiastical officials reject all fees; these I shall also lay aside for this object. Cornelius is the most intellectual of them. Overbeck and Wilhelm Schadow are amiable men and very clever artists, notwithstanding their proselytising spirit. . . . .

I am zealously performing my official duties. Unhappily I am still without instructions on all the important points, though I have urgently entreated that they may be sent me. The moment is favourable; besides, the people here are well disposed towards me, and I think I shall be able to come to arrangements with them. . . . .

23rd. . . . . I am glad too to hear that the German artists here call me the German minister. People from all parts of Germany who have no ambassador here, come to me as the representative of their respective countries. . . . .

CCXIX.

ROME, *7th December*, 1816.

Thank Heaven, my books have arrived at Leghorn; though no doubt it will be a long while before I shall get them here. I hope, with their assistance, to return to occupations that can fill my mind. It gives me great pain to think that my History must remain unfinished; that my Milly's only request will be left unfulfilled. Oh that I could fulfil it! But what I could do now would be too unlike the former part. From the general account which I have received of the review, mentioned also in your letter, it does not vex me much; it would do so, perhaps, if I read it. They may say what they will about the matter; I am as certain of the correctness of my views as I am of my own existence, and that I have discovered the solution of the enigma. It is not the love of conjecture that has impelled me, but the necessity of understanding, and the faculty of guessing and divining. For many points, still more numerous and express proofs might be produced, than those I have brought forward. He who presumes to pronounce a judgment on this subject without knowing more than the current opinions on it, has really no voice at all in the matter. Further, it is not to be expected that every one, or even that many, should have that faculty of immediate intuition which would enable them to partake in my immoveable conviction, for which I should be ready to die. Mortifications do not annoy me now as they used to do; but still it is melancholy that the love and appreciation of literature is so declining in Germany. This I may say without arrogance, that he who refuses respect to my History, deserves none himself. . . . . .

CCXX.

ROME, *Christmas Eve*, 1816.

Now, at the dead of night, as Gretchen has gone to sleep, and all is silent in the house, I will sit down to answer your two dear affectionate letters.

You will not misunderstand and misinterpret me for having suffered a week to elapse after receiving your former letter before replying to it. My eyes will not allow me to write late at night, though until now I have been able to read then without difficulty. I have perceived this change with alarm for the last month past; it is probably the effect of having worked too hard at writing more than half obliterated. Perhaps it will give way when this murderous work for the eyes is finished, which is not the case yet.

If reflection, when it has become too one-sided, and too domineering over a deeply feeling heart, is apt to lead us into errors in our treatment of others, it gives us, on the other hand, the power of looking every thing in the face, of supporting the most dreadful prospect, and maintaining our equanimity; but he who has neglected to cultivate this power, and always lived exclusively in imagination and direct perception, with these faculties nourished by an interchange of every thought and feeling with another, is, when a great calamity befals him, robbed of his whole wealth, and incapable of replacing it.

. . . . My first impression of the city remains unchanged. Brandis, too, finds nothing Elysian here. Neither the city, nor its inhabitants, so far as it is inhabited, have any charms for me. The magnificent prospects towards the surrounding mountains from some of the eminences would delight you. I still find the ruins of the imperial times uncongenial to my taste; there is wonderfully little that is truly beautiful. The frescoes of Raphael and Michael Angelo, and some ancient statues, are all that is really living in Rome. I often ascend the Capitoline Hill to look at Marcus Aurelius and his horse, and I have not been able to refrain from caressing

the lions of basalt. You cannot stand on the Aventine or the Palatine without grave thoughts, but standing on the spot brings me very little nearer to the image of past ages.

Among the present living occupants of Rome, our German artists alone have any worth in them; and in their society, as far as their sphere reaches, you may sometimes transport yourself for a few hours into a better world. Cornelius you know, from his illustrations to the "Nibelungen Lied." They are incomparably surpassed by those to the Faust, which have been already engraved. Cornelius is an entirely self-educated man. His taste in art is quite for the sublime, the simple and grand. We are constantly becoming more intimate, and may already call ourselves friends. He has an excellent wife, a native of Rome, who I hope will be of service to Gretchen when she needs a friend. He is very poor, because he works for his conscience and his own satisfaction, and purchasers who would or could measure their remuneration by the same standard are not to be found. I cannot afford to give the artists work, but I am glad to be able to help them as a friend when their necessities are pressing. Another frequent visitor of ours is Platner, who has been made a painter by an unlucky accident, whereas nature intended him for a scholar and historian. He is still poorer than Cornelius; his wife is very like Mrs. Reimer. The Tyrolese Koch, whom you will have heard of as a landscape painter, is a friend of theirs, an eccentric, petulant man, full of just thoughts and bitter sarcasms. With these three we can thoroughly harmonise, though Platner is Saxon in his politics, and only attracted to me by personal liking; Koch, however, has such an antipathy to Hackert and to the Propylæa, and Goethe's Winkelmann, that he even speaks absurdly and spitefully against Goethe himself. I like Overbeck and the two Schadows much, and they are estimable both as artists and as men; but the Catholicism of Overbeck and one of the Schadows excludes entirely many topics of conversation. Rauch was here for some time. Thorwaldsen estimates the representation infinitely higher than the thought, and maintains that a work which is false in

conception, but correct in drawing, is still the work of a master; while, on the contrary, a picture having the noblest idea, if in any respect erroneous in drawing, or imperfect in colouring, is only that of a learner. There are no learned men among the foreigners here at present, except my old tutor and friend, Playfair, of Edinburgh. Bunsen is here, however, and for him one must feel the highest esteem, but he is much engaged with an Englishman to whom he gives instruction.

You want to know my way of life. Whenever the library is open, and no conference with the Secretary of State stands in the way, I go, if the weather is tolerable, to the Vatican. There I am still occupied upon a manuscript in which I have found lost fragments of Cicero's Orations, a part of the fragment of Livy, which the earlier editors have not been able to make out, and other fragments of Seneca and Hyginus. The printing of these things will soon begin; I shall dedicate them to the Pope, for whom I still retain the reverence I felt at a distance. I often go to the Forum, where they have excavated an interesting spot. More distant walks can seldom be undertaken at this season of the year. When Gretchen feels inclined we take a drive. Three times a week, my Italian master comes, who is, however, a very bad one. Every Tuesday, there is a large dinner-party at the French ambassador's, which, as it always consists of the same persons, gets more tiresome every time. . . . .

1817.

About this time, A. W. Schlegel's attack upon Niebuhr's History came out in the Jena "Litteratur Zeitung," and other unfavourable reviews of it appeared in the Heidelberg "Jahrbücher," which vexed Niebuhr all the more, as, owing to his absence, he was unable to defend his work as he would have wished. A much more serious annoyance was caused him by a statement which appeared in the "Alte Freimuthige," from the pen of Gottlieb Merkel, accusing him of having torn the fragments of the Gaius, which he had sent to Savigny, out of books belonging to the Cathedral Chapter at Verona, and carried them off. Niebuhr caused a judicial investigation to be instituted, the result of which was that Merkel was condemned to "six months' imprisonment, or a fine of 500 dollars, for a libel against the Privy Councillor Niebuhr."

In April, 1817, his wife bore him a son after long and severe suffering. This event gave him the keenest delight, and it was the first thing that dispelled the cloud of melancholy which had hung over him ever since his first wife's death. He had never had any anxious wishes for children in his first marriage, but now his heart yearned towards the child that was born to him with the whole fervour of his deep affections.

During the summer of this year Niebuhr, with his family and Brandis, spent some time at Frascati, where he translated an essay on the Poor and Pauperism that had appeared in the "Quarterly Review," and had greatly

excited his interest. He occupied what leisure he had from the duties of his office this year, in studying the history of Greece and of Asia, from the time of Philip of Macedon to their conquest by the Romans, in order, as he himself expressed it, "to obtain a sharply-outlined picture of the period when Greek and Roman history first begin to run parallel to each other without coming into contact, up to that in which they at last coalesce." These studies were interrupted by a lingering illness, his recovery from which was long doubtful. It was, however, remarkable that even during his illness his mind felt clearer and brighter than for two years previously. While still confined to his bed he was able to study, and was conscious of the revival of that faculty of divination and happy combination, the loss of which had so often depressed him. From this time forward, a brighter era in Niebuhr's life begins, notwithstanding his settled dislike of the nation among whom his lot was cast. He was, however, long unfit for any bodily exertion.

On his return to Rome in October, he found Professor Bekker, of Berlin, who had been sent with Professor Goeschen, by the Academy of Sciences, to follow out Niebuhr's discovery of the Institutes of Gaius. Niebuhr invited Bekker to become his guest during the ensuing months which he intended to spend at Rome, and found in his society the opportunity of conversing on the subjects of his studies, the want of which he had hitherto felt so painfully since his arrival there. He now renewed his investigations in connexion with Roman history.

Many foreigners visited Rome during this winter,

among whom were the Crown Prince of Bavaria, Lord Colchester, and Lord Lansdowne; with the two latter, Niebuhr formed a sincere and lasting friendship.

Letters written in 1817.

CCXXI.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 1*st January*, 1817.

My first employment this day shall be to write to you. Till this time two years, the close of the old year was generally a happy and joyous time: my Milly made it a festival for us at home, at least, and we used to enter on the new year reading and talking together; frequently, with a spoken recollection of you—at any rate, with a silent one; for she clung to you with the warmest, tenderest love. She so often spoke of you with affection; she longed so to have you with her, though she was so happy in her love, that she could endure your absence.

How delightful were those eves of the new year, and of Christmas while we lived at Copenhagen, and before we had been drawn into the whirlpool of politics! But how delightful they were too at Berlin, although on the whole the destruction of our quiet, unconscious, individual life, had issued in a new, perhaps more brilliant, but less blessed epoch of our existence.

I try to employ myself; but it is to little purpose, for I find it is still as ever the case with me, that I can only work with success when I linger with pleasure over my occupations. My powers are still further paralysed by the disagreeable and deadening effect of the fashionable parties which are very numerous at this season. Then, too, the parties here are more insipid and annoying than any I have ever been in before. I have formed the intention of, at least, revising and correcting the Roman History, if I cannot finish it; I sit faithfully enough for hours together before my books, but memory and sagacity will not serve me as

formerly; vague recollections of things I have read, and of the existence of relations dawn upon my mind, but refuse to let me grasp them, or to assume a distinct shape.

I have many times before felt what it is to be in a foreign land; I felt it least of all in England;—in Holland more, after the first interest was exhausted, but never as I do here in Italy; here you can never learn to feel at home. There is no possibility of intimacy with those around you,—that is, with the Italians—no possibility of growing attached to them through common interests or feelings. No object of science or of occupation brings you together. If we could but let each other entirely alone, it would not be so bad; for we are not at a loss for society and friends, but that is impossible. I must keep up an intercourse with them. Every one is titled; every one has a certain rank; the noble and beautiful alone has neither rank nor existence. All the topics which occupy us in Germany are foreign to them, have no existence for them; their thoughts are not directed to any object or aim.

I have other anxieties, relating to my father-land, that is, my adopted one. There are rumours of war abroad, and they only give weight to a long cherished presentiment of mine. I have long feared a coalition against Prussia. I cannot bear to think out the details of the calamities which such an occurrence may and almost certainly must entail, of which, the least would be a progress towards barbarism and slavery. In such times, it is no happiness to become a father, and a heavy misfortune to be at a distance from one's own country. The impossibility of holding any affectionate or interesting intercourse with the natives of this country, is a great obstacle to progress in their language. Another hindrance is, that while all my anticipations regarding the miserable condition of Rome, in a moral point of view, have been fulfilled to the uttermost, I find the difference between the wretched language that is current, and the beautiful old language of the literature, far greater than I had ever supposed it to be. The more modern writings are such as no one could peruse with care; it is hardly possible to run

through them, still less to appropriate their language; but neither can you obtain a perfect mastery over the old classical language, for the new which you are constantly hearing, mixes itself up with it, and corrupts it. In Florence it still lives, but like a learned language, in the pens of many, and in the mouths of a few cultivated men. I felt there that I could render myself a complete master of it; but here it is so badly spoken, that it is impossible for me, at least with my present capabilities, to acquire it. I have begun to read Guicciardini aloud during the evenings; his fulness and power of vivid description render him most admirable as an historian. Further, we do not get on with our reading together as I could wish. . . . .

CCXXII.

TO JACOBI.

ROME, 11*th January*, 1817.

. . . . I am making some effort to purchase the tomb of the Scipios. It is a characteristic trait of this modern Rome, that when this unique and venerable monument of antiquity was discovered in 1780, the bones of Scipio, which were in a state of perfect preservation, were torn from their stony couch and thrown away! When people try to console you for the passing away of the old Roman times by saying that modern Rome has become Christian and Catholic, I cannot help quoting Lucan's consolation for the civil wars, that all this blood had not flowed in vain, for else Nero could never have reigned.

However, among the artists here, the pious and believing are by far the most eminent men, and there are some of them highly deserving of respect; but no place seems to me so fitted to confirm one in Lutheranism as this; unless, indeed, you are in close intercourse with the Pope, for whom your personal veneration increases with your knowledge of him. . . . .

Have I told you that I have found our Indian numerals in use in a Greek MS., which must certainly be older than the seventh century.

Goethe's Travels have only just made their appearance here, and I am reading them much as the Man in the Moon might read Schröter's Selenographical Fragments. But it is too wide a subject for me to enter upon it now. I had so much to discuss with you and Roth! among other things, the French Electoral Law, which I am quite full of at present, so much so that I have begun a pamphlet on the subject, which will probably, however, be left unfinished.*

CCXXIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *15th January*, 1817.

. . . . Gretchen is not at all well. . . . . But how much, to her as well as to me, hangs on the life of this child, which will very likely be your inheritance if Gretchen and I go before you. I know that you will tend and educate our child with the warm love of a mother.

I certainly look forward with gladness to the birth of this child. In case it should be a boy, I am already preparing myself to educate him. I should try to familiarise him very early with the ancient languages by making him repeat sentences after me, and relating stories to him in them, in order that he might not have too much to learn afterwards, nor yet read too much at too early an age, but receive his education after the fashion of the ancients. I think I should know how to educate a boy, but not a girl; I should be in danger of making her too learned. In Montaigne's times, the sons of learned men acquired Greek and Latin by conversation, like a modern language. I would relate innumerable stories to the boy, as my father did to me: but by degrees mix up more and more of Greek and Latin in them, so that he would be forced to learn those languages in order to understand the stories. If it is a boy, he shall have the name which my Milly would have given to hers;

* This fragment is contained in a volume of his smaller writings, published in 1842, p. 471.

that of my father and of yours. . . . If it is [a girl] it shall have Amelia's name and yours, and your united blessing.

Brandis feels the effects of our troubles—I fear of the climate too. . . . . For the rest, you know how much I am attached to him, and how I value his society. A purer heart, a more noble and unselfish disposition than his, there cannot exist; and these derive a rare worth from his refined intellect, and his quick appreciation of all elevated ideas. . . . .

CCXXIV.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

ROME, *22nd January*, 1817.

I have been ill for some time, dear Nicolovius: I was so for several weeks before I would give way; but at last I was forced to take to my bed. Now I am enjoying the refreshing feeling of recovery. While it lasts, I will clear off, without further delay, the heavily-accumulated debt of answer to your kind and consolatory letter. It is better that my reply has been put off so long, for such a black cloud hung over my mental horizon, that anything I could have written in that state would only have given you pain.

The physical cause of my illness was the changeable weather. The winter has been on the whole mild up to this time (and if nature is in any respect what she was in ancient times, spring must begin A.D. VIII. *Idus Febr.*), and pleasant from its dryness. No snow has fallen in the city, and the Triton has only had a beard one morning at most; but the Tramontane gives you cold much sooner than a snow storm, and the excessively rapid changes of temperature are more than my constitution can stand, particularly since I am frequently obliged to wear full court dress, and then to come from before an immense open fire down the exposed staircases through an icy cold sea of air. Then, too, the very quality of the winds here has quite altered since the ancient times; which has, I think, never yet been remarked. The Aquilo, or Greco, no longer blows from the N.N.E., but

from the N.E., and the Scirocco, or Vulturnus, was formerly dry and not very disagreeable: thus, too, I do not doubt that the character of the Libuccio and Ostro has changed much for the worse, though in the main they are what they used to be. Do you see that I am already becoming a Roman of the present day? for the prevailing wind, and the price of oil, and the size of the *pagnotti**, are the main ideas that occupy their minds; in fact, what can and dare we poor wretches think about besides? So in order to complete the information, which you have a right to expect from a Roman of the present day, I beg to announce to you that a *fogliette* of oil costs from two-and-twenty to four-and-twenty *bajocchi;* in your time it will not have cost more than seven or eight at most. Some aged men among the natives remember when an insurrection was near breaking out, because it rose from two and a half to four *bajocchi.* The price would have risen to forty with us, as the forestallers and regraters set no bounds to their audacity, but that a counter speculation was set on foot. Meanwhile, that forestalling is an honest trade, to which the State can offer no opposition; and that by these high prices and their profits, large capitals are created, which contribute much more to the increase of the national wealth, than the pennies trickling through the poor man's purse for his daily wants—has been proved to satisfaction by political economy, for which science there is unfortunately no gallows, because it was only in the schools of the rhetoricians that one could bring forward an accusation of *inscripti maleficii.* Our forefathers, however, would have drowned the teachers of this wisdom, and my old Romans would have banished them still more rigorously than the Greek sophists, or at least would have ordered them to cease from their *ludus impudentiæ.* At Castelmaggiore, in Sabina, sixty-two human beings have already died of hunger, as I have been assured by a parish priest, who seems to be an intelligent and honest man; this is the state of things everywhere among the mountains. As for ourselves, we are, indeed, in no danger of starvation, but I am obliged to

* Penny rolls.

renounce all indulgences in order to make both ends meet; can buy neither books nor works of art; and must quietly put up with having it said that we do not live suitably to our station.

I have written about Titel. . . . . I wish my recommendations of our much more eminent young painters may also be successful. I have no need to press this matter further upon *your* attention; and if there are great difficulties with regard to it, I am only making your heart heavy. There are two ways in which something really useful, and conducive to the dignity of Prussia might be accomplished; the one would do honour to the government; the other at any rate to the public. Either let the government summon some of the most distinguished artists to Berlin, and commission them to execute some great work in fresco—say, in the cathedral (to which the King would perhaps be most inclined), or in the University, or some other public building. Or, if the ministry will not listen to this, let a subscription be raised if possible among the wealthy for the same object, to which end you must go out into the highways and hedges and invite them to come in, where people are beggars only in a spiritual point of view, and their scrip is full. I have written to Savigny about a similar notion.* I think that the Princess William might be interested in this matter, and if necessary I would write to her about it. You have probably not yet seen the Faust of Cornelius—have you? It has, or will far surpass your expectations. Cornelius is a very high-minded, intellectual, and amiable man; a Catholic by birth, but so little a zealot, that when we were talking with him about his favourite idea of painting a Last Judgment, though he refused our request that Luther might be translated into the heavenly glory, on the plea that he dared not do that, he said that he should be represented as holding up the Bible to the devil, and the latter as retreating at the sight of it. I fancy Stolberg would approve of this too in the depths of his heart—don't you? I recommend the

* This is interesting as being the first suggestion from which the Art Unions, now so numerous in Germany, took their rise.

two Schadows strongly to the notice of the government. As for William, I fear that he is exerting himself beyond his strength and will not live long; but you must not let his father know more of this than is necessary to induce him to moderate his demands upon his son. Both the brothers are extremely industrious, and, like all our eminent young men, of irreproachable morality. Rudolph is beginning to acquire celebrity, and there is some prospect of his receiving important commissions from Englishmen. If so, it would be a terrible pity that he should not remain here for some years to come; for it is only through such labours, by producing great and numerous works, that the artist can truly develope himself. If obstacles of this kind should prevent him from obeying the dictates of his father, those who are in Berlin must excuse his conduct to the old man: in this case I have promised to claim your mediation, dear Nicolovius, and you would do a good work if you could prepare the old man for it beforehand.

There are two others besides, in whose behalf I shall boldly apply to the Home Office—the two Rhinelanders, Gau the architect, and the painter Moseler, who received stipends from the provisional government. I must earnestly entreat that these may be continued to them. Gau is a real genius, and has begun to make most important discoveries respecting ancient architecture; he has made drawings at Pompeii, which inspire much more confidence in their accuracy than those of Maizoy; here in Rome, he has made observations from the summit of the Capitol, which have suggested some very important ideas with regard to the ancient ground-plan of the city—for instance, that there are fragments of two plans of completely different proportions; he has also discovered the Ulpian Basilicæ; and further, recently, that the arch of Janus is constructed out of fragments of the so-called Temple of the Sun. He is extremely industrious, and it would be a thousand pities if he were obliged to leave Italy just at present. Unless I am much deceived, we may expect great things from him. Moseler is at work on copies from the old Cologne school of painters, which Wenner is bringing

out at Frankfort with an historical introduction, which has the great merit of dispelling, by its impartial and acute investigation, the mist that even the Boisserées have thrown over the supposed early period of art in that city. His results, unlike theirs, are in harmony with what is known from other historical sources, and therefore it is to be hoped that, after their publication, we shall hear no more of a school of art at Cologne under the Byzantine Emperors, or even dating back to the Roman times. But it is of great moment, to enable him to form a connected history of art from the earliest times, that he should see Tuscany and Venice. . . . What are they doing about the University on the Lower Rhine? I wish some appointment there could be found for our friend Platner, who is not great as a painter, but has a real vocation for literature. If it were possible to establish there, or in any other university, a professorship of Italian literature and history, and the history of Italian art, that would be the post best suited to his talents, and he would fill it with great honour to himself. He has begun to prepare an edition of Vasari, and would be quite capable of writing an excellent commentary upon Dante, if the publishers would condescend to patronise him. Unless my memory deceive me, he was not named according to his merits at Berlin. He is a particularly noble-minded man.

Be so kind as to return my kind regards to L. Stolberg, with the assurance that I should not fail for want of "going piano," even if the utter absence of all instructions did not render it impossible to advance a step forwards. This is a misery for which I cannot console myself, because a conjunction in every respect favourable is thereby lost to us. The Pope is ready, nay, offers to do all that is reasonable; he could not have expressed himself more clearly on this subject, than he did to me, a short time since, in a long conversation. We are regarded with favour in a political point of view, and as for myself personally I certainly do not stand in the way of the business. The dedication to the Pope of the Ciceronian fragments I have discovered here (I sent him the MS. a week ago), has greatly pleased the kind-hearted

old man; and the government are really more obliging to me in regard to public business than I could have ventured to hope; for they have gone so far as to receive from a Protestant ambassador, the filling up of incomplete clerical certificates. Still, I ask, if I am to have no other vocation than that of negotiating dispensations; is it at all worth while that my life and real calling should be thus sacrificed? With me, dearest Nicolovius, the inward life is burnt out, and my body too is exhausted. I lived through the spirit, and that is fallen asleep.

That the Cathedral Chapter of Cologne should extend its jurisdiction beyond the Rhine, is certainly out of the question, so long as the new bishopric of Aix-la-Chapelle stands in the way, and this gives a great deal to do in the way of negotiation; but if Cologne were created into an archbishopric, all difficulties would be removed; assuming, that is, that the government would endow the Cathedral Chapter and bishoprics, as Bavaria has done, which really does not involve an extravagant expenditure, and allow the Chapter to elect their own bishops. I have made a report upon the Bavarian Concordat to the foreign department, and hope that your department will learn the contents of my report upon ecclesiastical matters. Oh that you had it in your power to get my instructions forwarded to me!

I am still occupied upon the same codex; some extremely trivial leaves from Seneca, which are dreadfully illegible, but unhappily have never been printed, are costing me many valuable hours now, and will probably cost my eyes a great part of their power. I hope the dedication to the Pope will open the private closets, and then it seems impossible but that something should be brought to light. But Rome affords me no help towards my History. This Rome is a *Codex rescriptus*, where Cato's Origines have been erased, and a "Diario di Roma"* written over them. It is particularly unfortunate that one cannot get to the mountains, but that is quite impossible, on account of the banditti. We cannot even venture as far as Palestrina, or Cori.

* A miserable little daily paper at Rome.

Since your time, everything must have changed beyond recognition. This I am assured, too, is the case by those who have long lived here. The inhabitants of Trastevere are as tame as all the rest; as ugly as all the rest; they all steal along in silence and melancholy; the sound of song is nowhere heard. I have not seen a merry face since I have been here.

I deeply sympathise in what you tell me of Göschen's anxieties. Oh if it were but possible to be of any help to one's friends under such calamities! . . . .

CCXXV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *7th February*, 1817.

. . . . To-day, at eight o'clock, begins the wild buffoonery of the Carnival, to us a melancholy spectacle. It is a question whether even the Romans will enact it with any real gaiety of heart. Probably they did so as long as their easy life still resembled that of children in the holidays, but all merriment is strange to them now. A people of utterly vacant mind is capable of childish enjoyment as long as it has outward comforts, but when a period of agitation and calamity comes, when its playthings are broken, and it has to go hungry, it must inevitably become heavy and stupid. The difference between my expectation and that of those who had seen Rome many years ago, consisted in my having a distinct conception of this change. There is scarcely anything more repulsive than a fool without mirth. I can well understand how it was that Nicolovius and others, in the gaiety of their own youth, should have delighted in these merry fools. They should come and see them now! Every countenance is careworn, even those that are not emaciated by hunger. All is so changed here, that even the far-famed gesticulation and grimace of the Italians have almost entirely vanished. The people are kept in order by the iron rigour of the police; the cavaletto—the machine on which those

who infringe the police regulations are whipped—is almost permanent. You certainly hear of no murders committed within the city, and it may be, that when a people is condemned to live in such an indescribable state of physical and political misery, nothing but this iron discipline can enable us of the upper classes to live in safety. But what a state of things! You cannot venture to go where this coercion cannot also reach, and in Tivoli, a highly respectable man was murdered, a few weeks ago, in his own house by masked robbers. Latium, on the other side of Frascati and Albano, is quite inaccessible to me; and yet it is that spot which would above all things have rendered my residence here valuable to my History.

Certainly the country and the climate are beautiful. The fertility of the soil is inconceivable, and I should think that seven *jugers* might well suffice for a household. But the rank soil exhales death, and even the labourers are obliged to forsake the vineyards in summer. This has been a winter such as can scarcely be remembered, so mild and dry, but too dry for the crops. No snow at all has fallen in the city; but the high mountains in the Sabina are adorned with it. That snow can be beautiful, is incomprehensible to the Romans, *è pur cosa brutta.* By this time, however, it is melting away. In the gardens, everything is sprouting and growing green, as it does with us in the end of April; and it is as warm; the birds are singing and chirping. It is said that in Florence the distress is still greater than with us, and that people are dying of hunger daily in that city. . . . .

The editing of my little work takes up a great deal of my time. The fragments will be accompanied by an introduction and notes, besides a long essay. I possess Latin words and idioms in abundance, and of the best kind; the language is like a living one to me, so that if it were possible for the old Romans to rise again, in a few months I could speak it like a native, as fluently as I do English; yet I am not safe from the critics, for I know how liable one is, even in a modern language, to commit faults here and there, which those who are watching for them are quite able

to perceive, even when they are by no means masters of the language themselves. Now we must see if there are any MSS. of a different kind to be found. This is very uncertain, and even if some old treasures should still exist here, the hitting upon them is a matter of chance, and a good many artifices are necessary before you can gain access to them. I have quite won the hearts of the people at the Library: I have earned this respect and goodwill by notices of a few of their detached MSS. The worst is, however, that what I seek is not marked in any catalogue, but can only be discovered by personal researches. . . . . Gretchen is too ill to write to you herself. . . . .

CCXXVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 16*th February*, 1817.

. . . . The old Greeks were pretty near the mark, when they pictured our coasts, *i. e.* those of Italy, as the land of Cimmerian darkness, and fabled Apollo as wandering between Delphi and the noble Hyperboreans. It has already come to this with me, that I feel I am growing as superficial and ignorant as a modern Italian, and look up to all that you could send me with sorrowful humility; the genuine native Italians would indeed have to look up to it from the depths; those here, I mean, for whom I always feel angry that there is no other name than the shamefully profaned one of Romans; for the old men at Venice, Bologna, and Florence, said indeed with bleeding hearts, that all was over with their nation and their literature, and that their departed greatness was but an agonizing remembrance. . . . .

I rejoice in your plenitude of life, which is such an utter contrast to my stagnation. But I will pain you no longer by speaking of this; for I know that your love for your absent friend remains unchanged; I know how thoroughly you realise my present situation, and how deeply you sympathise with me. I will only tell you about myself and all of us

what will give you pleasure, and speak of you. Your traveller delivered your packet faithfully, and it is long since anything has so delighted and interested me. I give you special thanks on my own account for your masterly essay on the advocates of legislative novelties, which is as just in thought as it is powerfully written. My Cassandra-spirit says indeed, Alas, it will be of no avail! We are absolutely powerless to turn the broad shallow current of the spirit of the age into a deeper channel. But it is in itself a noble thing to sacrifice yourself by unwearied exertions; and more meritorious to scoop out in the mud a bed for the stream, than to sustain a sublime conflict with wild torrents. I cannot help thoughts of this kind; it is not because my own little barrel runs thick, but because everywhere things are on the lees, that I despair of the age and of posterity. Brandis will suffer no censure to be passed on the generation of his contemporaries; he himself and Bunsen have, from their own character, a right to challenge respect for their generation. I am well aware too, how many excellent young men you and I have come in contact with, and my dear young artists are miles above those who have hitherto borne the name. But it is not only true of the legislation of states, that the virtue of the nation can do no more than modify the errors of their rulers; the same thing holds good also with regard to the legislation of opinion and sentiment in such difficult times. If the road were but in some measure traced out and levelled for us, oh then the danger would not be so urgent! But nothing is further from the fact; and even if we were willing to allow that our country is richer in young men of ability and moral worth, now that our poetical age is over, than in the times of our fathers, our hopes for the future would not be thereby assured, if, as is undeniable, the problem of this generation is a hundred times more difficult of solution. We want a new creation, and in what respect are we prepared for this work? I see the jacobinical spirit that pervades our political writings, and, at the same time, I know for certain that thousands of our youths, without any bad intentions, never see anything else. It is one of my troubles here, that I see

nothing but the "Allgemeine Zeitung;" some German paper is a mental aliment I cannot deny myself; but this is bread from which you are obliged to scrape off the dirt. Does not the most senseless Westphalian and Rhine-league spirit display itself in the most arrogant manner in that journal, especially in all that relates to France? I take a great interest in the proceedings in France; I read the "Journal des Débats" from beginning to end every post-day, though there is not a creature here (except the French ambassador) with whom I can talk of it. I do not wish to rate these proceedings too highly, but in my opinion it is saying a great deal too little in their favour, to pronounce that we should manage things much worse in Germany. But this by the way. There we have a ministry which I rate incomparably above any other in Europe, in point of intelligence, ability, and good intentions; a ministry honestly attached to the throne and to freedom; supported by a party adverse to all revolutions; approved by a party who find themselves exactly in the position of the Tories under George I. and George II.—a faction whose heart is set upon a counter revolution which cannot take place, and who therefore constitute the most wholesome check possible upon all really revolutionary tendencies.

With regard to the cause of which you are the only true advocate, I have heard from Bunsen, and see with my own eyes, that the opposite party have an enormous majority. This is the case here too. A new code is to be drawn up. The French had annulled all the municipal constitutions. It must be confessed their diversity was carried to a great extent. Morelli, who made a collection of them in the library of St. Mark, brought together more than three hundred, and many were still wanting. Almost every city had gradually formed its own civil law, and this may partially explain the past rarity of MSS. of the Justinian Code. These repealed constitutions are to remain repealed, and the fundamental decree for the Papal States, of the 6th of July in last year, promises a new threefold code of laws, while there is beyond a question infinitely less capability for such a work here

even than in Germany; in fact, absolute incapacity with no individual exceptions. In the mean time, some general principles are promulgated. "What serves as the standard of law in the meantime?" I asked the president of a High Court of Appeal. "That is a great difficulty certainly," he replied; "the old Roman Code in two thick volumes *forse lo conosce?*"—An advocate sighed yet more deeply: "un libro grosso cosi! bisogna, facchini per portarlo, he, he, he!" This advocate has composed a preliminary treatise on criminal law, which is by itself three inches thick; for the Italians, with their utterly vacant minds, delight in native and foreign verbiage without ideas. Only a pregnant solid style is distasteful to them. He completely proves his vocation according to one of the criteria which you lay down, namely, he speaks in a pamphlet of the barbarity of the old Roman laws on debt. These belonged to the *jus prætoriale* which was the work of *capriccio*. Even the Twelve Tables did not alleviate the barbarity of the abominable *jus prætoriale*. Appius Claudius, the decemvir, was himself a prætor, and there lies the root of the matter.

We are very grateful to you for Goethe's Life. It no longer, indeed, reveals to us the golden and silver ages described in the first volume, but a very iron age, where even his joys and delights are a fit of intoxication, which the spectator neither can, nor desires to share; a strange, to me for the most part incomprehensible kind of delirium, in which he often neglects what is most glorious; and what does he not admire? In many respects he was doubtless infected by the spirit of his age, and in this way his mention of the Gallery of the Caracci in the Farnese palace, of the Bolognese school in general, and even of the St. Petronilla of Guercino, must be explained. I remember taking pleasure myself in Guercino, and even in Guido, but my liking for them had passed away before I could venture to express an opinion on such subjects. Our friends here are orthodox. But I could never have spoken coldly of Francesco Francia, and at the same time enthusiastically of Domenichino. The modern Bolognese themselves are, indeed, just the same.

The Canon Schiassi was obliging enough to take me into chapels not generally visited, where wonderful master-pieces of Francia lie forgotten, but he smiled at my Transalpine folly. It seems to me to be the same with Goethe himself as with many others, who affect connoisseurship on subjects for which all true feeling is denied them. I am inclined to think that Goethe is utterly destitute of susceptibility to impressions from the fine arts; that is, that he has no inward, native insight, which reveals to him what is really beautiful independently of the taste of the age, still less in opposition to it; or if he ever possessed this gift as a young man at Strasburg, he lost it during the unhappy period—passed over without notice in his narrative—of his court life at Weimar, before his Italian journey, and has never recovered it;—witness his "Winckelmann and his Century," "Hackert's Life," the "Propylæa," the "Æsthetic Problems" and "Essays on Art" in the "Litteratur-Zeitung," not to speak of his "Rhein und Main." This is one thing;—another is, the whole tone of his mind during his travels and residence in Italy, which is most remarkable, and would alone have rendered this description of his journey more interesting to us than anything else you could have sent us; but is it not enough to make one weep? To treat a whole nation and a whole country simply as a means of recreation for oneself; to see nothing in the wide world and nature, but the innumerable trappings and decorations of one's own miserable life; to survey all moral and intellectual greatness, all that speaks to the heart, where it still exists, with an air of patronising superiority; or, where it has been crushed and overpowered by folly and corruption to find amusement in the comic side of the latter—is to me absolutely revolting;—perhaps more so to me personally, than I can reasonably expect it to be to others, but I think it ought to excite sentiments similar in kind, if not in degree, in every breast. I am well aware that I go into the opposite extreme; that my politico-historical turn of mind can find full satisfaction in things for which Goethe has no taste, and that I could live contentedly without feeling the want of art, not only amidst the glorious

scenery of the Tyrol, but on moor or heath, where I was surrounded by a free peasantry, who had a history. But truth, though it always lies between two extremes, does not always lie in the middle. Goethe too, in his early life, belonged rather to the Rome of the fifth century of the city than to that of the Cæsars—rather to the Florence of Dante and Boccaccio than to that of Ferdinand the Third—rather to the Germany of Luther and Durer than to that of the eighteenth century—nay, he belonged wholly to the earlier period when he wrote "Faust" and "Götz," and his Songs. What evil genius inspired him with the notion of doing justice to the eighteenth century as well? From these "Travels in Italy" sprang the "Grosscophta" and those other productions, in which all that was holy and great in his nature is shrouded from view. To return to the question, I maintain, that it is absolutely impossible for a genuine and correct taste for art to exist apart from historical feeling, because the arts are inseparable; that historical feeling will manifest itself wherever there is a true taste for art, without any erudition, as is the case, for instance, with Cornelius; that even Carlo Maratta and Mengs are not without relative beauties, corresponding to the times in which they lived; only they possess no intrinsic value, and form part of an absolutely bad whole. Were I still "qualis Præneste sub alta," I would say much more on this topic.

When I recall the enthusiasm of Nicolovius for Italy, and compare it with the delirium of this book, how wide is the interval between the two! I think that Nicolovius saw much in too fair a light, but the earth and the sky enchanted him, and he delighted to his very heart in the *naïveté* of the people, which at that time had not yet ceased to exist; he was sincerely in love with all around him.

Goethe likes Venice; yet, in the procession of the Doge and the Senate, he sees—not the image of her ancient grandeur, of her countless great and wise men,—but simply a theatrical spectacle. But, throughout, it is curious to remark, how he generally leaves the finest objects unvisited,

or if he sees them, only places them in the second rank. Thus at Padua, for instance, he has not seen the Chapel of the Annunziata, where you ought to linger for whole days, but is highly pleased with the wide, marshy Piazza della Valle, garnished with statues so miserable, that they might have stood in St. Peter's; at Venice, he does not see San Giovanni e Paolo, which contains Vivarini's master-pieces, and the tombs of the heroes, with inscriptions that speak to the inmost heart,—nor yet the urn of the general who was flayed in Candia;—nor San Giobbe, which was then standing in all its glory. But altogether, how incredibly little he has seen in Venice, can only be appreciated by one who has been there himself. Yet, even those who have had this privilege, will be disappointed to hear nothing of the Ducal Palace, and the true marvels of the Place of St. Mark. Of Florence I will say nothing,—not even wonder how any one could hasten through it in such a way,—nor yet of his omitting to see the waterfall of Terni. I say all this merely to prove my assertion that he has beheld without love.

Italy was then quite another country; now she is despoiled and sick. I can enter into the feelings of those who saw her, when they were not made miserable by the sight of mortal anguish, of wounds that cannot heal. I, had I seen her then, should doubtless have shared the transports of those who did behold her in the gladness of their youth; though even then my transport would have been mingled with sadness. . . . . .

I broke off on the previous page, having continued my letter yesterday (17th). I broke off, because the merriment of our assembled friends was resounding from Brandis's room, and we did not want to shorten our evening unnecessarily. Cornelius, of Dusseldorf, Platner from Leipzig, Koch from the Tyrol, Overbeck from Lübeck, Moseler from Coblentz, and William Schadow from Berlin, were assembled in Brandis's apartment with Bunsen. In different ways and degrees we are attached to them all, and think them all men of talent. Their society is the only pleasure we derive from human beings here, and they have

already performed much in their art, and promise more for the future. I believe confidently that we are on the eve of a new era of art in Germany, similar to the sudden bloom of our literature in the eighteenth century; and that it only needs a little encouragement on the part of our governments to render us the participants of this beautiful development. Cornelius and Platner are, strictly speaking, intimate family friends, and so are their wives. Roman women, of the good burgher class, are great favourites with Gretchen. The women of this class are here incomparably superior to the men, just because they have a natural vocation, and show great zeal in fulfilling its duties; these two are agreeable and sincerely kind-hearted. Mrs. Platner is very like Mrs. Reimer, which is a great recommendation to us. Next to these, Koch and Moseler are our most intimate friends.

In the morning I had been to Cornelius and William Schadow with the joyful intelligence that Schukman's letter gave hopes of the fulfilment of their ardent wish to paint the interior of a church. If this should be brought to pass, it is indispensable that their labours should be shared by their inseparable friend, Overbeck, for both of them do homage to his genius, and regard him as the highest artist among their contemporaries. For my own part, I must confess that the genius of Cornelius appears to me even superior in fertility, while his power of drawing is certainly more wonderful. My good news had set them all in motion, and they came to spend a merry evening with us. They were followed by their friend and fellow artist, Ruschweyh, from Mecklenburg, the eminent engraver, who is likewise a very intelligent and estimable man.

We were all in high spirits, and amused ourselves with making fun of Platner, who has something of the Leipzig politeness still about him, which we are determined to dispel by fair means or foul, and he is therefore undergoing a regular course of strict moral diet, and is carefully watched if the least symptom of his old complaint betrays itself. Koch, who has a most thorough enjoyment of life, was chuckling with delight over a somewhat coarse allegorical

representation of our ministerial and government politics, which he had introduced, after the manner of Shakspeare's comic scenes, above, in the foreground of a picture of Hofer setting out on his enterprise, which he is painting for the Minister Stein. In one part a hissing snake was darting on the Tyrolese,—"That means the traitors who robbed the country of its freedom at Vienna." Then there are frogs decorated with orders, and a centipede, which is his particular favourite—"Those are the useless government officers." In one corner of the foreground lies the jaw-bone of an ass—"That is for me to fight the Philistines with." After looking at this, we went on with our reading, where we had broken off. Koch always falls asleep over the reading, unless it is something to make one's hair stand on end; so he slept quietly in the corner of the sofa. When we came to the passage, where Goethe describes how the dead are summoned forth after the curtain has fallen, Cornelius called to him—"Koch, the curtains have fallen with you too!" He started, and rubbed his eyes—"What is the matter?"

Cornelius is a most thorough enthusiast for Goethe, perhaps none more so; at least no man has owed so much of his inspiration to Goethe. He has a warm heart, and a fertile and profound intellect. At every spirited, life-like description, his face lighted up with pleasure, but directly that was over, resumed its expression of sadness and regret. The passage about the gondolier songs found an echo in all our hearts and from every mouth. But when we closed the book for the night, and we men still stood talking it over after Gretchen had gone to bed, before we sat down to our frugal supper, he broke silence to say, how deeply it grieved him that Goethe should have looked on Italy thus; that either his heart must have been pulseless during that period —that rich warm heart must have been frozen up,—or else he must have instantly stifled all emotion, so completely to keep himself aloof from the sublime, so completely to divest himself of respect for the venerable. As for Palladio, we were all agreed that those of our party who had been in Venice, had neither at Vicenza, nor at St. Justina at Padua,

nor in San Giorgio and the other churches built by him in Venice, seen anything that we could call chaste and really beautiful, and that it was quite inconceivable how he, who had been the first to do honour to the manes of Erwin von Steinbach—he, who had probably directly or indirectly re-awakened in all our souls the sense of the beautiful, should have seen in the works of Palladio sublime antiques, and never so much as named the cathedral of Ratisbon; that the cause of this phenomenon must perhaps be sought in an unfortunate mood, an obstinate steeling of his heart against the sense of power in the works of others, in order proudly to hold everything he saw, as it were, in his grasp,—to treat it as his absolute property, and to depreciate it when it pleased him; and we all lifted up our voices and lamented over that fatal court life at Weimar where Sampson was shorn of his locks.

All, however, will allow that very many things must make an entirely opposite impression according as they are read on this or the other side of the Alps; and hence also, we trust that our friends will allow themselves to believe, that if they, like us, had seen the objects he describes with their own eyes, they might regard in the same light as we do, those detached points which they now see with the eyes of this magical writer, whose very brilliancy (and this is what gives the edge to our sorrow) probably conceals something from their view.

To one whose views always rest upon an essentially historical basis, Goethe and his works are so entirely a part of history, that every detail which helps to throw light upon his own personal history, whether painful, or inspiriting like the story of his youth, is in the highest degree interesting. Do not therefore call me a renegade, dear Savigny; I have not forgiven him Sesenheim either; but if you read parts of this letter to any of my friends, for all of whom it is intended, take great care what you say to our friend Madame Göschen lest she should be angry with me.

. . . . The artists in Rome are divided, by a broad line of demarcation, into two parties, the one consisting of our

friends and their adherents, the other of the united phalanx of those who sit around the burning bush on the Blocksberg. At their head stand the R.,* fellows who know the world, who ingratiate themselves with the foreigners, and to whom our academical colleague, Goliath,† pays all respect. This set intrigue, and lie, and backbite; they intend there shall not be light, come what will. The former are exemplary in their life: the latter display the old licentiousness which characterised the German artists at Rome thirty years ago. Happily, at the present moment, the more talented of the new comers range themselves on the side of the former; the latter, too, are not wanting in recruits. It is significant, however, that some foreigners, and even Italians, are beginning to pay attention to the works of our friends. The Marchese Massimi has commissioned Cornelius and Overbeck to paint two apartments in a villa, and will pay them handsomely. Cornelius means to paint a series of subjects from Dante—Overbeck from Tasso.

. . . . I shall cost you a good deal in postage, dear Savigny, but I will make amends for it by sending you essays from time to time for your journal.‡

With regard to myself, I have often had thoughts of death this winter, and Gretchen too I think. Brandis still more frequently for me. I have no strength at all, and have grown excessively thin; my memory has suffered much, which is natural when you have ceased to take a hearty pleasure in anything. Only what the mind drinks in with eagerness becomes thoroughly our own, so as to form part of our life. God help us!

The carnival mountebanks are bellowing under our window, though it is a little retired street. I have only once gone to see the horse-racing, where the barbarity with which the horses are treated is revolting, and there is nothing to be seen but a horse which springs from his master and rushes wildly away. The masks are a wretched buffoonery; dull caricatures; wit is nowhere to be seen or

* Riepenhausens. † Hirt.

‡ Zeitschrift für historische Rechtswissenschaft.

heard. Of course we have not once attended the masked balls.

We have taken a house to ourselves from the 1st of June. It is a very beautiful place. Houses are the only cheap article in this terribly, incredibly dear city; where, moreover, the prices of everything required in housekeeping have risen one third since our arrival. For fifteen rooms on the ground floor, most of them large, besides bed rooms, and six above, we are only to pay 300 scudi, about 440 dollars Prussian currency; in addition to these, there are a coach-house and stables and a lovely garden. Nicolovius will remember the theatre of Marcellus, in which the Savelli family built a palace. My house is the half of it. It has stood empty a considerable time, because the drive into the court-yard (the interior of the ancient theatre) rises like the slope of a mountain upon the heaps of rubbish; although the road has been cut in a zig-zag, it is still a break-neck affair. There is another entrance from the Piazza Montenara, where a flight of seventy-three steps leads up to the same story I have mentioned; the entrance hall of which is on a level with the top of the carriage way through the court-yard. The apartments in which we shall live, are those over the colonnade of Ionic pillars forming the third story of the ancient theatre, and some, on a level with them, which have been built out like wings on the rubbish of the ruins. These enclose a little quadrangular garden, which is indeed very small, only about eighty or ninety feet long, and scarcely so broad, but so delightful! It contains three fountains—an abundance of flowers; there are orange trees on the walls between the windows, jessamine under the windows. We mean to plant a vine besides. From this story, you ascend forty steps, or more, higher, where I mean to have my own study, and there are most cheerful little rooms, from which you have a prospect over the whole country beyond the Tiber, Monte Mario, and St. Peter's, and can see over San Pietro in Montorio, indeed almost as far as the Aventine. It would, I think, be possible besides to erect a loggia upon the roof, (for which I shall save money from other things,)

that we may have a view over the Capitol, Forum, Palatine, Colosseum, and all the inhabited parts of the city. You may fancy the immense height of the walls of the old theatre, when I tell you that it lies in the valley between the Capitol and the island. You see, dear friend, that there is plenty of room for you, according to our promise, if you will keep your promise of paying us a visit. I am quite delighted with this dwelling, though I had some scruples in hiring it, on account of the great expense of furniture, and the probability that my life may not be of long duration. We are all longing to remove into it; but my wife must have quite recovered her strength before she can look after the necessary arrangements, for which I should be absolutely unfit. Gretchen is very clever in beating down and bargaining with these people, who overcharge their customers shamefully. She can converse with them about all the things of daily life, which I am utterly unable to do.

It is time now to turn to our literary business. . . . .

My constant indisposition has hitherto prevented me from putting the finishing strokes to the manuscript of my *inedita*. I have been obliged to supply many passages, which have been cut out of the fragment of the *Rabiriana*—I hope with success—one passage only is doubtful. To the *Fonteiana*, I have subjoined the evidences of the Romans having used double entry in book-keeping. . . . .

And now, as the Italians say, *voglio levarli l'incommodo!* that is to say, I take my leave of you. What a monster of a letter! Best love from us both to you and your wife. Remember me to all my friends; it is needless to name them. Give my special thanks to Roeder for his letter, which I shall answer shortly. Farewell!

CCXXVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

Rome, 8th March, 1817.

. . . . The day before yesterday was one of my Milly's festivals, which she never neglected to celebrate. It was the day on which I visited her and your parents from Meldorf, before I went to Copenhagen. It was indeed a happy day. How inexpressibly happy I was at that period, how cradled in the lap of fortune! I clung with such warm, unreserved attachment to you and your family, and your friends. Your father received me so kindly, Milly with such frank sweetness: I was so light-hearted, was conscious of all my powers, looked out into the world with curiosity and bright expectations. The day before yesterday was a very lovely day here; the almond trees are in full bloom, and the peach blossom is out; with the violets, which have been plentiful ever since December, you can now pluck hyacinths in the deserted gardens;—the air is like summer. On that day, the earth was covered with frozen snow; and though the sun shone clear, there was an icy wind: but what has north or south to do in the least with real happiness or even cheerfulness?

I expected not to see Schönborn again. There, too, has a fine character been rendered almost useless by the force of circumstances; there was more in the heart of the tree than ever appeared in its foliage and blossoms. . . . .

CCXXVIII.

Rome, 2nd April, 1817.

The trial is over, and a fine and healthy little boy is born to us; but it has been a terrible trial. . . . .

The boy weighs nearly nine German pounds, is fat and large, has red cheeks, yellow hair, and blue eyes. How Gretchen rejoices in the possession of her darling child, after all her sufferings, you can well imagine. She is very

much exhausted, but very happy. She sends you a thousand kisses. She received and read your welcome letter during her two-and-thirty hours of suffering. Her patience was indescribable. In my terrible anxiety I prayed most earnestly, and entreated my Milly, too, for help. I comforted Gretchen with telling her that Milly would send help. When she was at the worst, and she leant her weary head against me, almost dying, she sighed out—"Oh, cannot Amelia send me a blessing?"

I have already told you what our boy's name is to be; but he shall have a Roman one in addition, either Marcus or Lucius, by which he will be called. You have the first claim to be his sponsor; Behren is one of course, Savigny—his guardian if I die—likewise, and Nicolovius. Should Playfair return, we shall beg him to perform the ceremony of baptism, as he was formerly a clergyman.

I had so much to say to you on this occasion from the very depths of my heart, but I am not calm enough. Besides, I am quite exhausted by sleepless nights, anxiety, and fatigue. Your heart will tell you all. I cannot say anything in answer to your letter to-day. You shall have tidings of us punctually.

Farewell. Give our love and the news to all our friends.

CCXXIX.

30th April.

I was absolutely unable to write to you on the last post day.

The child is full of health; he looks briskly about him, and already begins to take notice. I can handle it very well; and it becomes quiet with me directly.

I am thinking a great deal about his education. I told you, a little while ago, how I intended to teach him the ancient languages very early, by practice. I wish the child to believe all that is told him; and I now think you right in an assertion, which I have formerly disputed, that it is better to tell children no tales, but to keep to the poets.

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But while I shall repeat and read the old poets to him in such a way, that he will undoubtingly take the gods and heroes for historical beings, I shall tell him at the same time, that the ancients had only an imperfect knowledge of the true God, and that these gods were overthrown when Christ came into the world. He shall believe in the letter of the Old and New Testaments, and I shall nurture in him from his infancy, a firm faith in all that I have lost, or feel uncertain about. He shall learn to perceive and to observe, and thus grow familiar with Nature, and nourish his imagination.

CCXXX.

ROME, 18*th May*, 1817.

. . . Gretchen still does not gain ground as I could wish, and my everlasting feverish colds are continually returning.

On Friday, the baby was christened by the name I told you. I stood proxy for you, Brandis, Bunsen, Platner, Cornelius, Schadow, and Overbeck, for Savigny, Behrens, Jacobi, Schön and Nicolovius. Madame Von Pobnheim was his other godmother. An English clergyman performed the ceremony according to the solemn ritual of the Established Church. I was deeply affected, and repeated the vows for my child with my whole heart. Even the Catholics who were present could not help confessing the sublimity of this liturgy. The baptism was followed by a prayer for and with the mother, which is repeated kneeling. I held the child in your name.

He is coming on famously. It often gives me a melancholy feeling, when, in the evening he stretches out his arms towards the light, and makes us carry him to the window, where he gazes up into the sky with a fixed, bright, serious look; then the recollection comes over me, of how Milly too gazed up into the sky the last time that we took her out. I thank Heaven that I can at least shed tears over this remembrance.

With my old friend Playfair, I have renewed the times of my youth, and am glad to find that there are some in Scotland

who still retain an affectionate remembrance of me. The dear old man and I parted with heavy hearts. The Marquis of Lansdowne regrets that I am not Ambassador in London. I harmonise very well with the English nation, and am sure that I should soon feel at home among them. How I miss writing to my father now, when I meet with people from distant countries and ask them questions! I have made the acquaintance of an intelligent priest from the neighbourhood of Nineveh, an Abyssinian; and of an Englishman who has lived for twenty years in the wilds of North America.

CCXXXI.

FRASCATI, 20*th June*, 1817.

I have spent yesterday and last night in thinking of my Milly, and this day, too, is sacred to these recollections.* I saw her a few days ago in a dream. She seemed as if returning to me after a long separation. I felt uncertain, as one so often does in dreams, whether she was still living on this earth, or only appeared on it for a transient visit; she greeted me as if after a long absence, asked hastily after the child, and took it in her arms.

Happy are those who can cherish such a hallowing remembrance as that of the departure of my Milly, with pious faith, trusting for a brighter and eternal spring. Such a faith cannot be acquired by one's own efforts. Oh that it may one day be my portion! Not that I am a materialist; you know well that no one can be farther from that than I am; but the *possibility* of an existence, of which we can form no distinct conception, is not enough for me, does not help me; other and opposite possibilities always present themselves. I well know what is that faith which deserves the name, and recognise it as the highest good. But it would only be possible to me to attain it through supernatural communication, or wonders and signs beheld with my own eyes; it is one thing to respect, and not to reject, quite another really to *believe*, as in one's own existence.

* Amelia's birthday.

What I hear and see among our acquaintance, often leads my thoughts to the subject I have mentioned;—faith, and its true nature. Several of them have a very earnest belief, though their belief is of very different shades; there are others, who fully imagine they possess religion, yet to whom one can scarcely attribute more than a self-delusive assumption of it. I associate chiefly, indeed almost exclusively, with the artists who belong to the religious party, because those who either are decidedly pious, or who strive after piety, are by far the noblest and best men, and also the most intellectual, and this gives me an opportunity of hearing a good deal on such subjects. Cornelius alone seems to have grown up from childhood, with uniform and lasting habits and convictions, which are as rooted in him as the facts of his experience; and his Catholicism is at bottom nothing more than the creed of the old Protestants. This he owes to the training he received from a pious and by no means bigoted mother, and to his completely unlearned education, in which the Bible (though in a Catholic family) was his only book. The case appears to me very different with those who are born in the Catholic faith, and have grown up in indifference. Of those who have been converted to this religion, O—* is an enthusiast, and quite illiberal; he is a very amiable man and endowed with a magnificent imagination, but incapable by nature of standing alone, and by no means so clear-headed as he is poetical. He bends easily and naturally under the yoke which another of our intimate friends, who has taken the same false step, has constantly to impose upon himself afresh, because it slips off him.† Another who is in the Roman college, I hope to bring back to Germany, and to see converted to Protestantism; he is a Jew baptised on full conviction, who had taken a violent disgust to the modern teachers among the German Protestants, but finds everything here so revolting that he has been almost driven into insanity by his despair.‡ Mournful as is the absurdity of going over to the Catholic religion, it may be accounted for, on the part of our young friends, in a manner which does them no discredit; but

* Overbeck. † Platner. ‡ Dr. Wolff.

strikingly shows how entirely many of the Protestant clergy have departed from all positive faith, and done violence to their conscience; for, if those who had the teaching of these youths, had instructed them in the doctrines of Luther, they would certainly never thus have gone astray. It was because they missed, in what they had been accustomed to regard as religion in their homes, that, without which religion is mere ballast, and found it, in words at least, at Rome, that they have been seduced into adopting all the follies of Rome as well. If my position did not forbid it I should like to exhibit to the world the present state of the church here; it might, perhaps, be of use. I have become acquainted with one very remarkable man, a peasant from Trèves, who came to Rome to get absolution from the Pope for some scruples, but has met with a very contemptuous reception. From his example, it is very clear that the Romish clergy are quite right with their views in prohibiting the reading of the Bible, for, by diligently reading the Scriptures, he had become nothing else than a very warm old Protestant pietist, without, however, being aware of it himself. He insisted boldly that the Bible alone was the source of faith, and that differences of belief could not affect eternal happiness. He had some similarity with Jacob Boehme in the style of his mental culture, which was quite uncommon, and in the persecutions he had undergone; was like him an enthusiast, and not free from the proud humility of the pietists, though only infected with this to a slight degree. I felt a great respect for him personally, and I hope to save him from further persecution. His history and character seem to belong to quite a different age. His case has made me think it probable that if the Protestant clergy still retained a positive belief, and the Bible were circulated in Catholic Germany, a second Reformation would not be at all impossible.

I told you before that Gretchen was ill; I trust that it is not a fever, but your hopes that her health would improve after her confinement have been by no means fulfilled. We came hither from the city, because I wanted to spend these few days quite without interruption. . . . .

CCXXXII.

ROME, 12*th July*, 18[illegible].

Your welcome letter has quite relieved my anxiety respecting your health.

It has been very hot for the last few days, but in our noble spacious rooms, I bear the heat better than I expected. Besides, we have both of us improved in health, and therefore in spirits, for some time past. Our sweet, healthy, lively baby has also had its share in this change for the better. I delight in giving myself up to my joy and pride in him, nurse him a great deal, play with him, and am rewarded by his smiles and fondness for me. But his mother is still the favourite, and I willingly yield her the privilege; it is her recompense for her unspeakable sufferings.

I wrote to you, a short time since, about my little work, the translation of an English Essay.* I have always taken a great interest in all relating to these simple duties of humanity. I thank Heaven I have often had it in my power to give help and relief, and this is still my greatest pleasure. If I could choose my sphere of action now, it would be that of the most simple and direct efforts of this kind. Since I cannot, I rejoice in all that others are doing in this way. I have little faith in the introduction of freer institutions, still less that they could lead to good results, while nations and their ideas remain what they are. Our evils could only be removed by a total change in our mode of life and habits, by the discipline of our morals and manners, by an increase of general comfort, and by the greater simplicity of our whole life. It is to me so pitiful and disgusting that men should quarrel about the law-giving, while they are indifferent about the laws themselves, which are the only end of the legislation; and I find no other better object than this among any of those who write on such subjects; the high-sounding phrases of liberty disgust me: not that my heart does not beat for liberty, more warmly perhaps than any of theirs who so mistake her true nature; but their worship of her is

* An article in the Quarterly Review, on the Poor. Vol. xv., p. 187.

exactly like a Roman Catholic service. If a single one of these writers would but go his way, and, at the sacrifice of his leisure and comfort, teach children, hold out consolation and a helping hand to the poor man where he can do no more; if he would strive by his advice and influence to obtain land for the cotter, property for the peasant; if he would first divest himself of the prejudices to which he is a slave; if, in these and other ways, men would begin to combine for humble and laborious objects which no government could hinder, we should have something on which to rest our hopes. But so long as I see no public spirit, no public virtue, no self-discipline,—so long as I see nothing, even among the better class, but the idolatry of wealth, (as regards the commonwealth, if not for themselves,) and the delusive notion that you can produce a work out of all materials alike, —that figures kneaded out of clay can endure like those hewn out of marble,—so long, if I were ruler, should I give little satisfaction to the clamorous, and excite a terrible outcry because I would not, with them, begin to build from the upper story downwards. How gladdening is it to see the humane efforts made by such numbers in England for really good objects, for the prosperity and education of the people! The observations on these subjects, contained in the article I have mentioned, are as if written from my inmost heart, and this *first* attack upon the Mammon system is so entirely what I have thought, and in part already said, that I should like to diffuse it as widely as possible. I should like to add many ideas of my own to it. In my earliest youth, the longing desire arose within me to spend my life exclusively within the precincts of a narrow circle, teaching and labouring; would to God it had been my fate!

CCXXXIII.

FRASCATI, 20*th September*, 1817.

As the direction of this letter will have calmed your worst fears on my account, I will begin at once with the announcement that I am decidedly improving. I am indeed still

writing to you from my bed, to which I am confined for the greater part of the day, and I am not secure from the chance of a relapse, but my state is very different from what it was a week ago. Then, I scarcely expected to write to you to-day, or only in order to prepare you for my departure. I thank God that the issue has been otherwise. How it would have grieved and shaken you! This severe illness seems to have done me good mentally. The inclination to study and work has once more awakened, and many ideas which I could never recall before, have returned with full distinctness as I lay upon my silent sick bed. God grant that it may last! I shall do all in my power to promote it. My weakness is still far too great to allow of my converting the desire to work into actual work. Else I feel as if I might yet be able to redeem my promise to Milly (to continue the History), and to meet her eye without fear.

During most of the time, I have regarded my death as quite certain, and often thought it near. I felt it sad to die thus in a foreign land, but I was indescribably calm, and quite peaceful in the prospect of another life. My Milly with her love would have embraced me with joy. I more than once chose the day on which I wished to die, and hesitated between the 8th and 9th of October; the first, the day of our (Milly's and my) arrival at Berlin; the second, that on which I laid her in her grave; where I shall never have the ardently-desired blessing of resting by her side.

By this time, the thought of death has nearly forsaken me; though I do not see how I am to recover fully; particularly as the physicians here know no tonic but quinine, which I cannot take at all.

. . . . If I recover, I mean, in the first place, to write a treatise on the constitution of the Greek provinces and cities of the Roman Empire, up to the time of the later Emperors—and another to prove that an oration attributed to Dion is not his work. The former will conduct at its close to an investigation into the constitution of the Christian communities. From a passage in Origen, I am persuaded that they were formed on the model of the political commu-

nities, and must therefore have differed in the eastern and western churches, which throws quite a new light upon the subject. I have also collected some decisive proofs, principally from the style, that the author of the African war is not that of the Alexandrian. Questions of Latin philology have been long attracting me, and I hope, if I live, that I may yet become a proficient in this branch of learning. In pursuing these studies, I have a view also to the instruction of my Marcus. I hope to get practice in speaking from Bekker, whose coming is a very joyful prospect to me in a philological point of view.

My poor Gretchen suffers doubly through my illness; both mentally and physically. Marcus is a very lovely child, large, fat, full of life and very sociable. Brandis's kindness, judgment, and amiability are not to be exceeded.

CCXXXIV.

ROME, 18*th October*, 1817.

. . . . Bekker's arrival has given me great pleasure; it is agreeable at once to give and to receive. I shall spend a great part of the evenings in grammatical and critical readings with him. We mutually know what we are worth, and in what respects one excels the other, while neither regards the superiority of the other with envy. It is a satisfaction too, especially when your own heart has been torn with sorrow, to feel that you are to a distinguished man, what few can be, and some even of these do not choose to be. Bekker has been rudely, and even cruelly kept down and oppressed from his childhood upwards; and it has made him morose and reserved; with us he is already beginning to expand, is becoming open and confidential. He had beforehand told others in Berlin, that I was the only person with whom he could become so. He lives with us, but dines out of the house. . . . .

CCXXXV.

ROME, *13th December*, 1817.

. . . . Rome is altogether an unhealthy place. The proportion of deaths to births is as three to two, and frequently still more unfavourable. It is worthy of notice that this was not the case under the French. One of the physicians here accounts for this by the superiority of their sanatory regulations. At that time, the children were obliged to be vaccinated. Last year 940 died of the small-pox. At that time, there were workhouses; now, the paupers are put into filthy dens, where they are thinned by contagious disorders, and die of hunger.

I have taken up a study which bears directly on the Roman history; I am traversing the desert of the ancient Latin scholiasts. I did not expect much from it, but I have found things of quite unhoped-for importance, particularly relating to ecclesiastical law, and the daily life of ancient times. It will very likely be possible to sketch a tolerably complete picture of both, though the separate features are still for the most part unconnected. I should like to rewrite many passages in my first volume, by which the whole could gain much in force and precision.

I have still less idea how any improvement is to be brought about in religious than in civil affairs; unless we have a new revelation. A religion in which people cannot stand firmly on their feet, but must hold on by their hands while their feet are suspended in the air, cannot long maintain itself.

The coarse proceedings on the Wartburg, mingled as they are with religious comedy, have deeply distressed me. They exhibit our youth as empty, self-conceited and vulgar. Freedom is quite impossible when the youth of a country are devoid of reverence and modesty. If I wrote according to the dictates of my heart, they would burn me also in effigy, and yet I know that all the *genuine* republicans of all ages would subscribe to my doctrines. . . . .

CCXXXVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, *26th December*, 1817.

The great difference between this and the previous winter, and which, in truth, far outweighs everything else, is the possession of our darling Marcuccio. The child retains his perfect health and beauty; is always lively, always sociable, and favoured by nature.

I am sadly pinched for want of books, now that the *inclination* to continue my History has re-awakened during my illness and recovery; my *courage* to attempt the work is still far from adequate. I have been studying the Macedonian history (in its widest sense) subsequent to Alexander; and though it is impossible to restore the whole structure of this history from the miserable fragments yet remaining, I have attained a subjective, intuitive view after my fashion, of the *vita publica et privata*, both of this kingdom and of Greece, during the period for which we have no continuous narratives, so that I think I should be capable of delineating it, when I came to the epoch where the transmarine policy of Rome commences. These investigations introduced me to that extremely interesting arch-rogue, Josephus, whose writings are a mine of treasure for Macedonian Syria, and Egypt; from him, I went on to researches into the Jewish constitution under the second temple (the Sanhedrin): and as I was reading the Old Testament (with which, in our German version, I believe myself to have been more minutely acquainted, for many years past, than ninety-nine out of a hundred theologians) afresh very assiduously during my illness, I was impelled unawares by my critical good or evil genius, as the case may be, to observe, not only the very remarkable character of the Mosaic institutions, but also the difference of authorship in one and the same biblical book, the date of their composition, and the totally mistaken views prevailing—so far, at least, as I am acquainted with the various opinions on this subject—with regard to the history of the Hebrew literature, &c. &c.

These are investigations, however, which, to be carried out to distinct and positive results, would require a knowledge of the innumerable notoriously worthless writings on these points, and the few sensible works of whose existence I am aware, (or believe in out of charity,) as well as an array of oriental philology, which I am too old, and moreover, just now, too much occupied with Marcuccio to acquire. Besides, I should probably give offence to some whom I would least wish to offend, and what is worse, please people of a different stamp. For the former would be quite wrong in taking offence at me. I might possess a much firmer and more lively faith (I only know an historical one) than from the circumstances of my mental history is now possible for me in this world, and yet hold at the same time my present critical views. . . . .

1818.

THE events which took place in Germany and France during the latter half of 1817, recalled Niebuhr's attention to political affairs. During 1816-17, France had been thrown into great agitation, by the success of the ultra-Royalist party in obtaining the disbanding of the Imperial army, the banishment of persons connected with the Revolution, the re-enactment of the laws prohibiting divorce, &c.; and it was rumoured that they contemplated nothing less than the restoration of landed property to its original owners. Towards the close of 1817, the Moderate party had come into office, but met with very partial success in their efforts to calm the storm that had been raised. In Germany, what was called the gymnastic *régime* had been in vogue since 1815. A large portion of the professors of the universities, and government officers, and nearly all the young men, wished to advance with rapid steps along the path of reform; and, as one means to this end, organised the youths in the schools and universities into associations, called Burschenschafts, for the promotion of their views. They also laid great stress upon physical training, which should enable each individual personally to struggle for the good cause, and gymnastic exercises occupied a considerable portion of the hours spent in the schools. There was, however, a strong party who wished to suppress—by violent means if needful—the development of all popular institutions, and bring things back to the old condition existing

before the Revolution. The Tricentenary of the Reformation was celebrated in 1817 throughout Germany, on the 18th of October, the anniversary of the battle of Leipsic, so that the festival was at once a commemoration of the religious and political liberation of the country, and naturally gave rise to contemplations of the present, and anticipations of the future. The Burschenschaft of Jena resolved to celebrate the day by a procession to the Wartburg, the fortress where Luther had been confined, to which they invited delegates from all the German universities, excepting those of Austria. They were accompanied by the authorities of Eisenach and four of the most celebrated professors of Jena, Fries, Oken, Kieser, and Schweitzer. In the first instance, moderate speeches, exhorting to patriotism and virtue, were delivered, and the assembly broke up and returned to Eisenach, where after dinner a service was held in the church. In the evening, however, when they formed a torch-light procession to the Wartburg, to kindle the so-called October Fire (the bonfire still customary on the 18th of October), much more excited speeches were made; and, at last, when most had already left the mountain, a Berlin student appeared with a bundle of books and papers, and exclaimed—"As once Luther, by the burning of the papal bull, gave the signal for the separation from the Romish chair, so shall a signal be given here by devoting to the flames the writings branded with the contempt of the German nation for their un-German tendencies, and their opposition to the spirit of the age." And amidst the applause of the spectators, various works of an anti-liberal and

reactionary character were thrown into the fire, together with an Austrian corporal's stick, a Hessian pig-tail, and a Prussian military sash, after which Charles Follen's celebrated "Grosses Lied" was sung. Unhappily, several of the works thus anathematised were the productions of men high in the Prussian service, Von Kamptz, Ancillon, and Schmalz; and since rumour, as usual, greatly exaggerated the occurrences, the governments of Berlin and Vienna took up the matter, caused the ringleaders in the affair to be arrested, and instituted inquiries, which lasted for a long time, on the supposition that a revolutionary conspiracy had been formed; but it was finally proved that there was no ground for such an idea. Niebuhr, as will be seen from his letters, agreed with neither of the contending parties.*

This festival also gave rise to many theological productions, and others were called forth by the speech of the King of Prussia on the occasion, whose recommendation of a union of the Protestant Confessions was the first germ of the efforts that finally issued in the fusion of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches throughout the greater part of Prussia. Previous to this date, there had been in many sincerely pious Protestants, who were disgusted with the rationalism that widely prevailed in their own church, a disposition to fraternize with the Catholics, and a hope that something like a compromise might be brought about. But the spirit of controversy evoked by this celebrated festival, and the revival of the order of the Jesuits by the Pope, widened the existing religious differences of every kind, and

* See his letters of 13th December, 1817, and 10th of January, 1818.

produced much bitterness between the Catholics and Protestants.

The strong interest which these circumstances excited in Niebuhr, suggested to him the idea of delineating the moral and intellectual history of Germany since the Thirty Years' War, but the impossibility of procuring the necessary materials in Rome prevented the execution of this project.

Incitements to research in other directions were not wanting, and, among other things, he discovered in the course of the summer the key to the Oscan tongue, and succeeded in partially deciphering an inscription in that language.

In July, his second child, a daughter, was born.

In the autumn, he had to regret a serious loss in the departure of Dr. Brandis, whose health was much injured by the climate of Italy, and who, besides, wished to devote himself exclusively to those philosophical researches which have since raised him to so eminent a position among the scholars of Germany. He was succeeded as Secretary of Legation by M. Bunsen, who, however, as he was already married, did not reside in Niebuhr's house.

During this winter Niebuhr obtained the appointment of a Protestant clergyman to the embassy—a circumstance which afforded him much satisfaction.

Letters written in 1818.

CCXXXVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 10*th January*, 1818.

. . . . I am frightened at the prospect of composing my third volume, and the disproportion of my present powers to the work, although there are many interesting materials for it.

I have become indifferent to the reception of the earlier parts; probably I should not be so if by straining all my powers I had brought forth another from my inmost soul. Would it be well if I were so? No, I am convinced that this philosophical equanimity is real death, and that the most vehement emotions, as they have ever been the companions of all greatness and beauty, are also necessary to their existence. Without this storm, the mind will not sail over the floods, though it may sink in them, and now perhaps generally does sink. I also look forward at the turn of the year, with gloomy forebodings, to the age that is before us. I see nowhere any encouraging signs: if there are deficiencies among the rulers, there are quite as many among the governed. It is utterly impossible to deny that our youth are, on the whole, declining in cultivation, and becoming coarse and barbarously indolent. Under the gymnastic *régime* there must inevitably be an end of science and literature; and, indeed, of all that is noble, quiet, and beautiful.

Did I tell you that my correspondence with Stein has been renewed by a friendly letter from him, containing commissions? Stein is very melancholy and hopeless.

In France, there is a dreadful fermentation, which will probably lead to fresh calamities. It is but too certain, that the French also will not find the right path again, at least not for a long time to come; but they have gained much in intelligence, and you not unfrequently hear thoughts from

them, more sound and weighty, than any which reach us from Germany. The Germans seem to be reeling in a beer revel.

We have scarcely joined at all in society hitherto, but that will not do any longer. We are settled in our house, and must now, from time to time, give large parties. One is awaiting us to-morrow. With the French envoy I am most intimate. I am very friendly with the old Bavarian ambassador, but he is quite decrepit.

CCXXXVIII.

ROME, *7th March*, 1818.

Your last letter, written out of the regular course, was a refreshment to me such as I have not had for a long time.

It has always given me a sufficiently fearful idea of the sufferings of hell, to conceive of them as consisting in a full perception, (devoid of all consolation, all delusion, all intermission,) of the whole misery into which we have been plunged by sin—of all the consequences that have sprung from it, and all the happiness of which we have deprived ourselves.

Yesterday was always a festival to me from 1798 to 1815; that is, ever since my visit to your parents and Milly in Heide. The day of my visit, and indeed that last winter that I spent in Kiel, in constant intercourse with you, was one of the brightest spots in my life. My Milly always kept the day, sometimes by giving me little presents, always with conversation, and a holiday dress. Her first word on waking in the morning was to remind me of it. I believe that I often dream both of her and you; but my former vivid consciousness of my dreams has passed away, along with my vivacity in all other respects. Fate has, however, granted me the festival of this day by permitting me to see both you and Milly in my dreams, in which you were both so lively, so affectionate, so really present to me, that I awoke, and even in awaking still retained a sense of the old happy days. . . . .

I have received Harms's Theses,* and Falck's article on them. They have occasioned me much thought. I wrote an essay on them, but it is too bitter. We should soon come to an understanding with each other about them by word of mouth. I agree with Harms in all that he says about the irreligiousness of a system of morals on an independent basis; and further, in his aversion to a Christianity which is none, and I even approve of his personalities against many of your Holstein theologians. But I consider his limitation of genuine Christianity to the symbolical books,† and his zeal against the union of the Protestant churches, as an error. All who are acquainted with church history know, that no system of doctrine respecting redemption, hereditary sin, grace, &c., existed for at least the first two centuries after Christ; that on these points, opinions and teaching were unfettered, and that those were never considered as heretics who simply accepted the Creed (the so-called Symbolum Apostolicum), kept in communion with the Church, and were subject to her discipline. Now certainly this test would be amply sufficient to exclude those hypocritical pastors who only nominally belong to the Church; for such *cannot* accept this confession of faith. This Creed, together with a simple faith in the contents of the New

* Harms' "Ninety-five Theses" were among the numerous theological publications that appeared on occasion of the Tricentenary of the Reformation. They were directed against the rationalistic tendencies of the age, and maintained the old orthodox Lutheran doctrines of the utter corruption of human nature, and the necessity of a correct creed to salvation, in all their strictness. The Theses made a great sensation, and called forth numerous answers, to which Harms replied in a "Defence of the Theses" and a pamphlet entitled "Demonstration of the Worthlessness of the Religion of Reason." Harms is still preaching with all his wonted vigour, and influence upon the minds of his hearers, in Kiel, at the age of seventy-three (1851). Although he has been blind for the last two years, he has lately published a Letter against the Kirchen Zeitung, edited by Hengstenberg, vindicating the one hundred pastors who have been expelled from Schleswig-Holstein by the tyrannical Danish government.

† The Augsburg confession of faith, in the Lutheran Church, to which Harms belonged; the catechisms of Heidelberg and Dordrecht for the Reformed Church. Since the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Prussia and most other German States, the symbolical books include all these catechisms.

Testament as the revealed word of God, is at once sufficient and indispensable; but I do not see why we should desire to impose any further yoke. The orthodox divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries subscribed to the symbolical books with a fulness of conviction which we cannot possess now, because they are a systematic body of doctrine, and the systems of one century are uncongenial with the mental habits of another. But it was this party which persecuted the most pious men of those times—Paul Gerhard, Franke, and Spener. If the golden age of Christian liberty subsisted within the limits I have mentioned, why must we now have slavery?

Next, as to the union of the Churches.* I should say that one must be a Eutychian to lay any stress upon the dogma of consubstantiation. A pietist, for whom I have a great regard, delights in the idea of union; for, he says, "that of which I am convinced is, that the Lord's Supper is a promised and miraculous means of conveying strength and sanctification, but all that simply concerns verbal interpretation is very unimportant to me; and the form of the ceremony, and the theological doctrine respecting it, are as indifferent to me, as it was to the blind man whether his eyes were touched with clay and spittle, or with anything else. But it is not indifferent to me whether we Protestants remain divided or not, considering our present position between an active mysticism and Catholicism. But for our divisions, the whole of Germany would have become Protestant, and the misfortune of the Thirty Years' War would never have taken place." Luther's position was very different from ours, and the use of historical insight is to show us clearly how a thing may be wise at one time which is not so at another. After all, the most difficult matter is to walk in humility, and to govern oneself.

* The union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

CCXXXIX.

ROME, 27*th March*, 1818.

. . . . There are more here who decidedly like me than who are opposed to me. The Pope and Cardinal Gonsalvi treat me with real cordiality, which is of great importance in a place where everything is decided by personal feeling. Thus, if I had available instructions, I should soon be able to conclude all the requisite arrangements with the greatest advantage to the State and the nation. It weighs heavily upon my mind that it is not in my power to accomplish this, but that I am only putting the State to a large and useless expense; with your strict principles you will quite enter into my feelings. I can give you proofs that I do not deceive myself; my mediation in the case of Geneva has so far prevailed that its affairs will be brought to a successful issue, as soon as a preliminary form has been gone through by the Genevese government; and if the deputies of Berne and Lucerne take the course I have advised, as they have expressed a wish to do, they also will infallibly obtain their object in spite of all the difficulties in the way, which their governments have regarded as almost insuperable. The people here are convinced of the perfect honesty of my intentions, and perceive at the same time that I will not suffer myself to be imposed upon. An Italian despises those whom he deceives; but when he cannot succeed in deceiving a man, he respects him, and, if he finds him well-intentioned, conceives an attachment for him after his fashion. . . . .

Every now and then, I make a fresh attempt to write upon these subjects,* and then lay down my pen again, when I consider, that although there have been instances in which political pamphlets have led to the adoption of the measures recommended in them, in a free State, there is scarcely any example, under a monarchy, of a minister having carried out any measures proposed in a recent pamphlet. However, I know that no republican can ever have loved his nation more ardently than I love Prussia.

* Political and ecclesiastical relations in Prussia.

A tendency towards reformation is at work in the Catholic Church in Germany. A German is here now, who is a sincerely pious man, and is leaving Rome in a state of indignation. I often converse with him about the convulsion that is inevitable, but must proceed from below. He and others like him have chosen the motto of St. Augustine as their watchword: Unity in essentials, liberty in the rest, and brotherly love. It will be seen that this alone can help us.

CCXL.

ROME, 11*th April*, 1818.

Bunsen is a very clear-headed and estimable man. Hardenberg has promised me to appoint him successor to Brandis. I am very glad of it: on my own account, because I like him; for his sake and the State's, because he has a decided talent for public life, and will distinguish himself. Brandis is still undecided as to his plans. It seems likely that he will receive an appointment in the university on the Rhine, which may probably be established next autumn. His father's book upon Magnetism is on the way—one hears nothing on such subjects here. An extraordinary case of miraculous cure, which happened during the early part of my stay here, made a great noise. Perhaps we ought not to attempt to give a philosophical account of such occurrences, but to content ourselves with observing them, and attempting to form a general conjecture as to the direction of the forces which produce them. An absolute denial of so many instances, still seems to me unwarrantable.

The religion prevailing here is an abomination to an unprejudiced person. A Chaldean, a man of great ability, who had applied to me for money to get a Bible printed here in his native language, under the censorship of the Propaganda, will probably be banished from Rome. I had hoped to obtain from England, America, Russia, and our King, the money required for this undertaking, and for the erection of a printing press with which he wanted to print other works at home afterwards. This enterprise, to which I expected to have

been able to contribute, is one of the things with which I had often consoled myself in moments of melancholy.*

Cornelius has made an agreement with the Crown Prince of Bavaria, and we shall lose him. I am quite grieved at it.

The child is fair and flourishing. He is growing very fond of me, and begins to have little endearing ways. He kisses my hand without being bid.

CCXLI.

ROME, 1st *May*, 1818.

The state of the air is indescribably oppressive. Every body here believes that there has been an earthquake somewhere. The sirocco prevails uninterruptedly; the sky has been dark and cloudy, the air like a furnace, and every one has felt wretched and ill. At such times you are fit for nothing.

With regard to Harms' Theses, let us, in the first place, settle the points on which we agree with each other and with Harms. In my opinion, he is not a Protestant Christian, who does not receive the historical facts of Christ's earthly life, in their literal acceptation, with all their miracles, as equally authentic with any event recorded in history, and whose belief in them is not as firm and tranquil as his belief in the latter; who has not the most absolute faith in the articles of the Apostles' Creed, taken in their grammatical sense; who does not consider every doctrine and every precept of the New Testament as undoubted divine revelation, in the sense of the Christians of the first century, who knew nothing of a Theopneustia. Moreover, a Christianity after the fashion of the modern philosophers and pantheists, without a personal God, without immortality, without human individuality, without historical faith, is no Christianity at all to me; though it may be a very intellectual, very ingenious philosophy. I have often said, that I do not know what to do with a metaphysical God, and that I will have none but the God of the Bible, who is heart to heart with us.

* This Chaldean was afterwards banished (along with Dr. Wolff) for having accepted assistance from the Bible Society in carrying out his scheme.

Let him who can, bring the God of metaphysics into harmony with the God of the Bible; and he who can accomplish this, will be authorized to write symbolical books that shall be a law to all ages. He who grants the absolute impossibility of solving the main problem, which can only be approached by asymptotes, will not grieve over the inevitable consequence, our possessing no *system* of religion. Many passages in the Bible admit of various interpretations; are these made a matter of controversy among pious people? There is a remarkable and noble passage on this point in Tertullian, who nevertheless was a true zealot.

People have aimed at bringing religion into an absolute system, in imitation of the scholastic philosophy, and in behoof of church government. In so far as the sense is plain, well and good. But where it is doubtful—and that is the very point at issue—who is to decide? The Catholic Church is not left without a decision; she claims to have a tradition, and she asserts an immediate miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit upon the decisions of councils and popes. We have seen what this has led to, and Luther has saved us from that misery. Luther himself took his stand on tradition. He sketched no new outline; he only cleansed the besmeared picture from what, according to his notion of the original, he recognized as defacing additions. Hence sprang, for instance, his doctrine of the Eucharist. The Christianity, the faith that was within him, not that which stood before him, and was external to him, was the material on which he laboured. He always, consciously or unconsciously, took his stand on tradition. Not till after him, came the Reasons of the Orthodox, who wanted to set up a system. In the eyes of these Pharisees, all profound feeling, all glowing devotion, was an abomination.

It has been said with great truth, that the bull *Unigenitus* led to, and is responsible for, the overthrow of religion in France; and he who really knows the history of Germany knows the injury which orthodoxy has done to the Protestant religion. It is only an indirect consequence of it, that its obnoxiousness has occasioned the defection of numbers to

the Romish Church: for if you oppose authority by authority, it must be confessed that that of the Councils is of greater weight than that of a society of doctors and pastors; we have always left this objection of the Catholics unanswered.

In the symbolical books, there are doctrines respecting plenary inspiration, and the connexion of the Old and New Testaments, which can never come into force again; and how much else is contained in them, of which the early church knew nothing! Let any one only try whether the standard which I require be a small matter or a great one; and let no one secretly substitute for it, the permission to explain religion into a human doctrine, and its historical facts, according to the rules of ordinary occurrences; seeing that I demand precisely the reverse.

The matter will remain without practical influence on legislative measures. It can have none, and the controversy will die away, when people have once fairly got to hating each other. Then something else will come up.—You speak of the morbid tendency to innovation in our times: I abhor and mourn over it with you, but the controversy, of which we have been speaking, is in truth one form of it. When the novel part of any question has been quite worn threadbare, people turn to the old, which has then become new again; and thus the ball is thrown backwards and forwards. It is the same in politics and in literature. How many changes of fashions have I not witnessed already, and I may say witnessed without changing my own position! In my youth I beheld the former theological "*enlightenment*," (with disgust indeed, although from a distance) during which every adherent of the old belief was an object of contempt. Oh that men would build up! Nothing *can* come of constraint and command in these matters. O that men strove, in simplicity of heart, and in union with those likeminded to themselves, to attain true, fruit-bearing faith, piety, and love!

Do not fancy me unqualified to give my voice on this subject. I know that I am qualified, by possessing a fully adequate knowledge of the history of the Church, and even

of her system, of which I know more perhaps than you give me credit for. Here, where it is of importance to guard young men against the seductions of the Catholic priests, I have ample inducement to turn my attention to theology.

So you think my unfavourable remarks on the Italians too severe. Believe me, the longer I live here, the more they are confirmed. I have become acquainted with one exception (and how should there not be some such?) a man of great talent, upright and honourable—the painter and restorer, Palmaroli; and his history and own testimony are again a confirmation of all I have said. Persecuted with a refinement of malice by envy, neglected and slighted by the government, all his efforts have been a struggle to produce works of art, and to save magnificent old paintings. This man says that his heart expands only in the society of Germans.

CCXLII.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

ROME, *6th June*, 1818.

. . . . I will send you by Rauch a pamphlet that has been published here, intended expressly for the conversion of the young Germans. If Schmieder comes, he must bring Luther's works for me (or send them by sea), and the writings against Popery. It cannot be expressed how disgusting these proceedings become the more you see of them. At this moment, the proselyters have S——,* one of the ablest young artists, on their bait. Dear Nicolovius, the whole life that the artists lead here is worse than useless; it is essentially injurious. They are in a completely false position; they associate as equals with people of rank—they get a distorted view of all the relations of the world, and grow vain and prejudiced. For Heaven's sake, do not dream of allowing any of them to stay here too long. It is only in a diversified civil society, comprising a variety of classes, that an artist can remain a healthy-minded man, unless he be a miracle, like Cornelius. That Cornelius is a healthy-

* Schadow.

minded man, I will give you a proof. The evening after Bunsen's child was baptized, we and several more were at his house. Bunsen lives in the upper part of the Palazzo Cafarelli, and over the Palatine; as we were standing, after midnight, on the *loggia*, we saw Jupiter sparkling as if he were looking down on his Tarpeian rock. We were drinking healths. I said to Thorwaldsen, "Let us drink to old Jupiter!" "With my *whole* heart," he replied, with a voice full of emotion. Some were startled; Cornelius touched our glasses and drank it. . . . .

CCXLIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 20*th June*, 1818.

. . . . The negotiations at Frankfort are spoiling everything. They imagine themselves able to make a reformation in the church, because they have a hankering after novelty, and never dream that such undertakings can only succeed, when hearts are lifted up in their behalf, as in Luther's time, whereas, they themselves have no feeling about the matter; and, indeed, no one can have any feeling in connexion with the mere ordering of external relations. They may perhaps be instruments of good, but their way is as false as Luther's was correct. . . . .

I shall write to you again next week. I could not let this day pass without a letter. Read the soul of its writer. In those old times too we clung to each other. May we be restored to each other in another life!

CCXLIV.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 20*th June*, 1818.

. . . . Brandis and Bekker are going to Florence the day after to-morrow, and Cornelius will leave at the latest in autumn; it is uncertain whether for Munich or Düsseldorf.

The proselytising spirit here is at last causing complete divisions among us. No one can have judged these absurd

proceedings more leniently in insulated cases than myself, or with more kindness and endeavour to enter into the weaknesses and peculiar circumstances of individuals. But when these men take high ground, and seek right and left to make proselytes; when, not satisfied with kind indulgence, they attempt to make their ignorance and narrow-mindedness pass current for a higher insight, it does, and ought to make one indignant at heart. A little hand-book, by one Abbé Martin, has appeared here, which is full of the most scandalous lies respecting Luther, and the shallowest defence of Popery, and attacks upon us, and it is put into the hands of every young man on his arrival.

The proof sheets of the Gaius have thrilled me like an electric spark. If Göschen is not inclined to the revision at present, he need not be afraid to put it off for a time. In a good mood he can do it admirably, and it *must* be done admirably. Be sure to send me all the proof sheets as they are printed. What does the postage signify? It was once intended that I should receive a copy in small writing on fine paper; if there is such a copy made, be so good as to give it to Beneke, to be forwarded to me. I should much like to append some emendations, not so much for the public, as for your consideration and use, if you can turn them to any.

The mention of the privileges of the Flamen Dialis in this proof sheet, has accidentally (as is generally the case) thrown a light in upon my mind. Why did he emerge from the paternal authority without *capitis diminutio;* why were his relations in so many ways strange and abnormal? Because his inauguration was a kind of *arrogatio,* whereby he entered the *gens* of the gods, at any rate became their client. I find the proofs extremely interesting. They appear to be extracted from the part which has been twice written over, and I bow in wonder before the skill of Göschen and Hollweg. The double rescription proves the inadequacy of our palæographical definitions. Such a chance is inconceivable, as that the remnants of the half-effaced MS. should have been left untouched for centuries, then taken up, then erased

again, and then by accident used for the same purpose over again. But unquestionably this was the true state of the case; the transcriber began to write the Epistles of St. Jerome in large uncial characters; it struck him afterwards that this would make the book too cumbrous, so he erased what he had done and wrote in italics. Or perhaps, the calligrapher who could write the uncial characters died, or removed, so that they were obliged to take another. The character in the codex of the Gaius is the base of the Anglo-Saxon; consequently, this was in use so early as the seventh century. I much wish this opportunity may be embraced to give a brief elucidation of the affinity of these characters. . . . .

What do you say to the Bavarian constitution? what a *mauvaise plaisanterie effrontée!* Particularly the law on the freedom of the press. That on ecclesiastical relations is sensible and praiseworthy; but how does it agree with the Concordat?

I wish there were any form in which I could write about politics; and that we were not so certain that to print any opinions would be in itself a reason for the adoption of contrary measures. The government order respecting Coblentz has pained me to the heart. Görres' pamphlet is the best thing of the kind that I have read from his pen, and much better than we could have expected.* It shows a capacity for sound views. If I were in Berlin, I would write what alone is true, and no one should be able to take exception to it. There, too, I could write the history of the moral and

* Görres, who was at this time decidedly liberal in his views, and edited the "Rheinische Merkur" with great ability, presented an address, on occasion of the visit of Hardenberg to Coblentz in the spring of 1818, praying for various political reforms, which was followed by other addresses of the same nature from Mayence, Treves, &c. Hardenberg held out hopes of their wishes being attended to; but the King was highly incensed that the people should take upon themselves to dictate the measures necessary to be adopted, instead of waiting to see what reforms he thought fit to grant them; and Görres, who had taken the lead in the matter, found it necessary to retire to Frankfort. Several other expressions will be found in the following letters of Niebuhr referring to these proceedings.

intellectual changes of our nation since the Thirty Years' War, the key to all else; here, naturally, I can write nothing. . . . . You will receive through Rauch the copy of Ulpian that has been collated by Brandis. There has been scarcely anything to alter in it.

CCXLV.

TO JACOBI.

26th June, 1818.

Roth's letter, (rich in cheering news of you,) and your own, to both of which I intend this as an answer, found me recovering from a sevère illness,—a state such as you know and have described; one which comes near to a rejuvenescence, and, like youth, opens the whole soul to all that speaks to the heart and the intellect.

. . . . The spring began here a day earlier than Pliny has fixed for its commencement, namely on the 6th of February; the air was soft and refreshing, but there were no leaves nor singing birds. This was followed by cold, and heavy showers, and now all at once it is as hot as in the dog-days. Even in the early morning, you have scarcely any sense of coolness in rooms where the windows have been open all night. Still, everything is bearable when the sirocco does not blow. But, in April, there were days when we all, Gretchen, Brandis, Bekker, and myself, lay half dead each in our own room. It cannot have been so in ancient times, or it would not have been an honour to the Romans to have overlooked that the habitable world began with the Alps.

About the Italians you will have heard R.'s * testimony, and we Protestants can leave it to him to paint the clergy and the state of religion in this country. In fact, we are all cold and dead compared to his indignation. His society has been a great pleasure to us all, even to our reserved friend Bekker, who in general turns pale at the very thought of

* Ringseis, a physician who had accompanied the Crown Prince of Bavaria to Rome, and was a zealous and pious Catholic.

Popery, and finds me far too indulgent. With an enthusiast so full of heart as R., you can get on; between such a luxuriance of fancy, and the unshackled reason, there is much such an analogy as subsists between science and art; while, on the contrary, the slavish subjection to the Church is ghastly death. The most superficial prophet of so-called enlightenment cannot have a more sincere aversion to enthusiasm than the Roman priesthood; and, in fact, their superstition bears no trace of it. Little as the admirers of Italy care for my words, I know that I am perfectly correct in saying, that even among the laity you cannot discover a vestige of piety. The life of the Italian is little more than an animal one, and he is not much better than an ape endowed with speech. There is nowhere a spark of originality or truthfulness. Slavery and misery have even extinguished all acute susceptibility to sensual enjoyments, and there is, I am sure, no people on the face of the earth more thoroughly *ennuyé*, and oppressed with a sense of their own existence, than the Romans.

Their whole life is a vegetation, and when we who live here, recall the apologies made by a partiality which even excuses their indolence, it is impossible to repress a feeling of indignation. While whole families, not to speak of the servants, sleep round the charcoal pans in winter, and often get suffocated out of pure idleness, the nobles carry on *conversazioni* which are not much better, and in which, besides, most are neither speakers nor listeners. The universal knavishness and love of pilfering are also the effect of laziness; people must eat and cover themselves; and this must be made possible without interruption to their laziness.

The present government have undertaken the task of introducing tolerable civil security by police, in the midst of ever-increasing wickedness and degradation—a system of constraint and terror that may impose fetters upon the wild passions of the animal man.

They never so much as think of securing at least his physical comfort; he may sink into deeper and deeper misery,

but he shall fear blows and the galleys more than he cares for his own instincts. Surrounded by an omnipresent espionage of police, conscious how he himself would be ready to accuse and betray any other man for a certain reward, Dread shall be his supreme deity. In the metropolis, this has succeeded to astonishment, and crimes of violence upon the person are rarer than in other capitals. The cavaletto, or flogging machine, is nearly permanent, and during the carnival literally so. The police regulations for the carnival, for the theatres which are open then, and for all public festivities, sound revolting, and they are carried into execution. There is no criminal code at all, but the punishments are quite arbitrary. One of the most scandalous crimes is punished very mildly, why? . . . .

The execrable Cardinal Ruffo is dead,* and an historical character, who is not inferior to any commissioner of the Convention, relates, chuckling with delight, what his Calabrians did with the towns, and even the convents, *that had been jacobinical.* Even the murder of a wife is very leniently punished. I have extracted the *casus in terminis* from the lists of sentences, because no one will believe what I say on these points. The effect of this severity, however, is seen in the absolute lifelessness of the common people. The nobles, who have nothing to fear, are equally apathetic from their utter inaction, and the gratification to satiety of the lowest desires.

Dear Jacobi, I could not venture to say openly to our German patriots, what I do not hesitate to write to my government, that the overthrow of Buonaparte's rule has been the greatest calamity to Rome, and the restoration of the old government the greatest sin against the nation. They could no longer proceed in their old careless routine; they were forced either to adopt wiser or more ruinous measures, and the former course was impossible.

God knows whither their present course is tending, since there is no prospect of reform and alleviation. Did not

* He had been the leader of the counter-revolution in Naples.

Woldemar,* who lived in a golden age compared to the present, declare that he knew not how a change was to come without a deluge or a miracle. The Jeremiades on the misery of Rome under Buonaparte are the stupid twaddle of ignorant artists. To extirpate priestcraft, such as it was and is, was a necessary amputation, and, *on the whole*, it was performed—my friends may cry out against me as they will—with discretion, forbearance, and moderation; the people were employed and cared for. The population of the city was suddenly diminished, but those who remained would soon have found themselves much better off, and all things would have been brought into a natural course. The number of births increased rapidly, the priests were no longer able to command or permit abortion; the number of deaths diminished incredibly. The conscription was disliked, but was wholesome for the people; a French regiment was a school of honour and morality to an Italian, as much as it is of corruption to a German. Some life was awakened among the higher classes; they began to take some interest in things, and very much, perhaps all that is possible, would be gained for the Romans if they were to recover animation. There were a pretty good number of criminals executed without the attendance of a priest, consequently condemned to eternal damnation; while now, in the opinion of the common people, every criminal who is executed goes fully absolved into heaven. The officials set the Romans a pattern of liberality and conscientiousness, and the *fournisseurs* were models of strict integrity and humanity, to the managers of hospitals. All this you will not misunderstand.

It must be confessed that fiscal avarice, and the idolatry of so-called property, stood in the way of a radical reform. It would have been necessary to compel the great nobles to give heritable leases on their estates, and to divide the ecclesiastical property *viritim;* and this indeed would never have been done. The imposts are heavier now than in 1813.

What it must be, to an honourable and public-spirited man,

* Woldemar was the title of a novel written many years previously by Jacobi.

to live among such a people, I leave you to imagine. It is an utterly false idea to suppose that any relics of antiquity have been preserved in manners, customs, &c.; in the country there may be some isolated instances of the kind; but you cannot penetrate into the interior on account of the robbers. To you I may venture to say, without disparagement to my interest in the works of our German artists, that I am sickened of art as I should be of sweetmeats instead of bread. But there is no one here, particularly since Brandis and Bekker have left, with whom I can converse upon the subjects that lie nearest to my heart, mutually giving and receiving information. Colonel Fischer, one of the deputies from Berne, made a transient exception, which was invaluable to me. Still I could, if need be, do without learned conversations; but to have no one with whom I can hold a rational conversation upon the affairs which concern mankind in general, upon the events occurring in England, Germany, and France, is positive death. Whether the Disputa, or the Heliodor, be the more perfectly painted, &c., &c., leaves me not only indifferent, but in the long run becomes insupportably tedious. Besides, it is not improving to be always limited to talking on subjects that you understand imperfectly, and on which you are always obliged to take a very inferior position to the persons with whom you converse, without any fault of your own.

However, this is not the only evil in our German society. Our young artists are not uncontaminated by their contemporaries; without learning, without reflection, they are extremely dogmatical, and, on all points, quite look down on those who are not of their confraternity. Some who are here exhibit astonishingly fine talents, and no one perhaps is more zealous than myself in furthering their development. Truly a new day has dawned upon art, and Goethe has sinned greatly in denying the fact. To speak without a ridiculous modesty, my mission, in other respects so useless, has in this probably been of most essential service. Your Crown Prince may do more; but his stay here has so far done more harm than good. He has made the young men

arrogant, and turned their heads; their prudent friend no longer satisfies them, because he does not worship them, and places art, in the usual narrow sense of the word, far below wisdom, and that art of which it is the embodiment. . . . .

Your countryman Cornelius, who will bring you a letter in a few months, makes a glorious exception among our artists: he is the Goethe of the painters, and has in every respect an open and powerful intellect, free from all limitation.

Your Constitution is an important event. It will give you an idea of Rome, when I tell you that no one has anything to say about it; the name of a constitution is enough for the Germans, and more especially the *freedom of the press.* I do not ask for a perfectly unconditional freedom of the press, but where such a law exists I would still avail myself of the proffered advantage of the censorship for my security. This law appears to me the least good of the whole series, and that on religious institutions the best.

In your Constitution it is very remarkable what trouble has been taken to find business for the Estates to perform. They are only auditors of accounts with greater solemnity. Meanwhile I congratulate you sincerely; though I would rather have had something different and better. For as I adhere to the principles of Möser and Fievée,* I care little for a worshipful *assemblée legislative*, unless it be—but that would lead me too far.

It frets me to be out of Germany, and therefore unable to say anything about important national questions, on which Görres, to my astonishment, has come pretty near the truth. In this long letter, I will not enlarge upon the various details of your elective forms, in which I am sorry not to see all the former imperial towns represented separately, as is the case with the mediatized princes. On the whole, however, every amelioration gives me pleasure, even if it is imperfect.

Farewell, dear friend. Give our kindest remembrance to

* This refers to their advocacy of communal and municipal freedom. Fievée's letters on the history of the French Legislative Assembly, in 1815 and 1816, had just come out. In his general principles, Fievée trod in the footsteps of Turgot.

Roth and your sisters. Gretchen and I kiss your fatherly hand.

CCXLVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 1*st September*, 1818.

I must have already told you more than once, dearest Savigny, that your letters operate upon me like blood upon spectres, whom it nourishes. The time and space, that separate me from a better life, disappear for the moment; images and recollections rise up with vividness, and thoughts, which there has been nothing in the dead vacuum of Hades to excite, form themselves once more into shape. This simile is more elegant, and, at all events, more worthy of your letter than another, which has perhaps still more truth with regard to myself. I might compare myself to a dead frog, in which movements that bear the semblance of life are produced by the touch of metal.

Be that as it may, your letters instantly excite in me a desire to answer them, and when I received, about three weeks ago, yours of the end of July, I replied to it immediately; but the intense heat which had prevailed almost without intermission for nearly two months, and had been rendered unsually intolerable by a constant sirocco, had had such a depressing effect upon me, that I did not like to send you my grumbling epistle, and I became still less willing to do so, after it had once been laid aside that it might be replaced by another. This latter was never written, owing to very sad circumstances. You know already that Gretchen has been confined again . . . . probably, also, that the child was very delicate. Added to this, the summer months are very trying here for children. We know the style of the medical treatment at Rome. The child would certainly have been lost, had not a young physician from Berlin been here, and adopted reasonable measures. The infant has certainly now made some progress towards recovery, but is still far from well, and its possession is an extremely precarious blessing.

Gretchen's health has received a severe shock owing to the

anxiety from which she has scarcely been free for a day since the birth of the child, and her unspeakable anguish since it became seriously ill. . . . .

I was not made ill by the excessive heat because I constantly vegetated in-doors; but I was very much exhausted, and the sudden change of temperature brought on an attack of dysentery, which has been removed, however, by instant attention. Marcus alone has stood the heat with unabated vigour, and never felt the change of weather in the least. He is such a happy sprightly child; always full of mirth and laughter. Probably his overflowing health is the reason that his teeth are developed so slowly. His making no attempt to speak yet, may partly result from his being able to make himself understood about everything, partly from the mixture of the two languages which he hears buzzing about him. Everybody loves him, from the women, to an old Franciscan of Ragusa, who often pays us a friendly visit; and his nurse, who has no very warm attachment to her own children, tells her fellow-servants that she weeps when she thinks how soon she shall have to leave him. The happy time is now not far distant, when he will be able to listen to stories; and this will make Rome and my life here tolerable to me, even if I should be compelled to renounce entirely a wider sphere of action. The more disordered the state of the world, the more needful is education; in an age that is growing old and decrepit, a simple world of ideas must be created for the child, in which its mind may grow up strong and unclouded. A clear understanding can least of all be dispensed with, when the confusion of ideas and half-truths is greatest; it is exactly at such a time, that principles, which have been early implanted and carefully watched over, so as to gain all the strength of a prejudice, confer extraordinary power, both over the world within and that without. He who begins his course thus armed, fights with a weapon which is wanting to those around him. Moreover, the mass of things to be learnt, which oppresses and confuses the brain when you have no guidance, may be wonderfully simplified by a teacher, and yet the child may be fed on marrow instead of

dry bones. It will be a great blessing for the child, if the King's promise is fulfilled, that a chaplain to the embassy here should be appointed. . . . .

The difficulty of governing in these times is immense. Superficial opinions have diffused themselves on all sides, and acquired authority. No change in the forms can give birth to a higher wisdom, the rarity and impotence of which is the worst disease of our age. In the rest of Germany, things are no better, and in most parts still worse than in Prussia, though the malice of our enemies has the craft to avert censure from themselves and direct it on us. The Bavarian constitution is a genuine child of the age; hence it will be extolled far and wide.

The Austrian administration of finance has been unveiled to the initiated, by the invaluable documentary evidence set forth by its panegyrists.

As I have often told you, I can execute no learned work here. Neither have I been able to avail myself of the Library this winter, because the only two librarians who were obliging and knew where books were to be found, have been occupied in replacing books, that had been collected and ranged in new mahogany cases with splendid plate-glass fronts, for a few hours, by express command, that the Pope might have the satisfaction of surveying them. Then, too, I did not begin to keep a carriage till March, and I live about two miles from the Library. Now Mai is coming here, and then everything of the kind is out of the question. . . . .

Do you know that I have some prospect of becoming a citoyen de Genève? And that I have earned this title by my services? If I do, I must certainly write something one of these days with all my titles and dignities after my name. We have had a Swiss embassy here, whose intellectual head, Colonel Fischer of Berne, was one of the most sagacious, noble-minded and estimable men whom I know. He and I became great friends, and his departure pained me as if we had lived together for years. I find that I have still got a frightful quantity to tell you, and have neither space nor time left. To-morrow (I am ending this on the 4th), we are

going to Genzano, where we shall live under the same roof with Madame von Schlegel. Curious! Our little one is rather better; the country air will very likely benefit her and her mother. What a pity it is that we can scarcely stir beyond the walls of the towns for fear of the banditti! I mean to observe the mode of husbandry there. The peasants are not so bad, if the poor creatures had but a little property. But the barons and the clergy have swallowed up everything; so late as 1590, the inhabitants of Aricia were lords of a great number of small estates in the valley (though the Savelli had already got many of them into their own hands by confiscation); at that time there came a dreadful famine, and these barons took everything the people had, in exchange for corn, which they sold to them at the rate of *forty* piastres for the *rubbio*, which in ordinary years now costs *ten*. There's a sacred right of property for you! The peasant women, whom we know most of, are honest people and capable of attachment; only their avarice must be gratified, which, however, happily is possible. But the higher classes, the clergy, the so-called citizens,—no, dear Savigny, you can form no idea of such a pack of vagabonds. Farewell! Our hearty love to you and your wife.

Yours, NIEBUHR.

CCXLVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 1*st September*, 1818.

We are going into the country to-morrow for a month, to Genzano, a very pleasant place above the beautiful Lake of Nemi, where the shade and fine trees make the country very charming to us Germans, when we compare it to the bare desert about Rome. . . . .

It is a subject of great satisfaction to me, that the King has acceded to my proposal that a chaplain to the embassy should be appointed, and that the choice will most likely fall on a very excellent young clergyman from Saxony, a great friend of K. Roeder's. According to the testimony of Professor

Heubner, he must be all that one could wish in a teacher of religion for our child. It is my most ardent wish that Marcus may be sincerely and earnestly pious. I cannot inspire him with this piety; but I can and will support the clergyman. His heart shall be raised to God as soon as he is capable of a sentiment; and his childish feelings shall be expressed in prayers and hymns; all the religious practices that have fallen into disuse in our age, shall be a necessity and a law to him.

Hemsterhuis says, that, even as a golden age subsisted in the unconscious innocent contentedness of man, favoured by nature like a child by a mother, so must the race by manifold wanderings arrive at a state of clear understanding, in which man will cultivate and govern the desert for himself. I by no means share in this dream, but for the individual it is possible, as regards the understanding and intellect, if instruction is brought to the aid of natural talent. That intensity of conviction and of feeling on which all else depends, may be attained by cultivation. But whether a strong-minded and clear-thinking man may not find himself continually more and more a stranger and an outcast among his contemporaries, is another question; for the age on the whole is declining intellectually.

You know, perhaps, that Savigny and I have taken up the idea of the continuance of the Roman municipal institutions under the barbarians; I have definitively discovered their transition into the republican institutions of the middle ages, and am certain that I have found the key which will enable us to understand the old German civil liberty and equality.

In the country, I shall occupy myself with agriculture, in order fully to understand that of the Romans. I shall also try how far it is possible to get towards the old Latin cities in the opposite range of hills; *i. e.* if the robbers are not too near; for, though less numerous, they are worse than ever. Their chief is as if maddened, since his whole family has been murdered. Now, he murders every one he can get hold of, and the government has set a price upon his head, and promised a pardon to any one who may deliver him up, in

the hope of seducing some one of his comrades to do so. Everything that occurs betokens a horrible degeneracy of the whole nation.

CCXLVIII.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 1*st October*, 1818.

We have already returned to town, dear Savigny, contented with having, by our visit to the country, avoided the pestilence of September, which, this year, has certainly been sufficiently antique in its character. It is a very expensive affair to stay in the country during October; for all who have contrived to remain in Rome during the unhealthy months, when you are condemned to utter idleness by the heat and the weight of the air, stream out into the country as soon as the atmosphere begins to cool, and the vegetation to revive. By this time, it often begins to be very cold among the hills, but in Rome it is a mild after-summer; while through the summer, the air on the mountains is temperate and elastic. It is not even the vintage which attracts the people; to their taste, the theatre in Rome is more interesting. But such is, once for all, the established usage, and when a number of people are thus crowded together in small places, equipages and dress attract more attention. In spite of the threatening cold, I left Genzano with reluctance. It afforded me a thousand times more enjoyment than the oppressive city. I should have liked extremely to see the vintage, and the wine-pressing, but it was too expensive for us, after all the disbursements of the summer. . . . .

It is no easy task to German parents to bring up children here; you must have them almost constantly with you, for it were better to see them dead than that they should grow up like the people around them. No one can fully appreciate this without personal experience, and I beg you will not shake your head at what I say. If you were only here a week, as a resident, and as the father of a family, you would see what is the state of a people without reason and

conscience, in whom all selfish impulses are let loose. The only difference is, whether these impulses are kindly or malignant, and whether they can be brought into some degree of equilibrium and harmony among themselves. You see here, what the human being becomes under the combined influences of a wretched superstition, and utter incapacity for piety; in Naples, by all accounts, matters are still worse, because the people are by nature more passionate and more malignant. The character of the passions there, and what you see of them here, is as unpoetical as possible, they rise to savage fury in the twinkling of an eye. Confession, and absolution, and indulgences may work well among a conscientious and deep-hearted people like the Tyrolese. Here, they open the door to utter abasement. All this seems the strangest to me, when one looks back to the old Romans, who were governed by a religion of the strictest veracity, fidelity, and honesty. If it should ever be in my power to continue my History, I shall venture to demonstrate how this religion, which was something quite different from Stoicism, was the foundation on which the greatness of the old republican time was reared, and how the whole life of the constitution depended on it. It was not the splendid *balance des pouvoirs*, but that the balance was suspended among a virtuous people.

. . . . Your explanation of the unfriendly feeling towards us, which is so prevalent, and which I perceive only too distinctly among the young Germans in Rome, is, to a certain extent, incontestably correct. But you must also take other causes into the account, to which your benevolence will hardly attach sufficient importance, but which nevertheless exist. In small States it is not so much a *fear* of the mightier State belonging to the same nation, as wounded vanity. Ever since he lost his simple greatness of character, the German has been by nature fond of slander and detraction, by no means candid, and still less loving. For some time after our war of liberation, they were forced to be silent, and respect us: but respect is, to a German, a terribly oppressive feeling. I think it possible that, at that

time, great men might have founded an enduring respect for us. Let us remember how Athens saved the liberties of Greece in the Persian war, and that Thebes, &c., betrayed her. The moral condition of Athens was not much more praiseworthy than that of the other States; still we know now, after the lapse of two thousand years, that Athens had a very different intrinsic value from them, notwithstanding the Cleons and Hyperboluses. But envy excited hatred and ingratitude towards Athens, and the cowards and traitors were the genuine Greeks.

CCXLIX.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *7th November*, 1818.

. . . . We have had a busy season of court festivities, which I have been obliged to attend—a wearisome kind of life to me. Still there were occasionally some beautiful spectacles, and if the aspect of political affairs were different, one could feel some amusement as a looker-on at such a festival, in spite of its emptiness. But when the people are wasting away with famine, when the money that is squandered is taken from the necessitous, when dissatisfaction or apathy reign everywhere, you feel indescribably melancholy at an entertainment, where you do not even see a single happy face.

One plague of the winter is the ever-increasing swarm of travellers of rank. I have a number of them on my hands just now.

The proselytising tract of the French ecclesiastic is not in the book shops. If I can get you one copy you will have enough of it; for it will not bear a second reading; it is a shallow thing. I think you are correct in saying that Stolberg's life of St. Vincent would better serve the purpose of these proselytisers, because in that, words and example speak to the heart; for truly not even an uninstructed man will allow himself to be caught by controversial writings; and if

Secker's work against Catholicism be put into his hands, he has not the shadow of an excuse. But if such a beautiful picture, which, though a true representation of the individual, is completely defective as applied to the class, had an undue influence on an ardent mind, you ought to refer such an one to the biographies of pious Protestants,—of Franke, Paul Gerhard, and so many others, who are certainly not inferior, in point of self-sacrifice, energy, and warmth, to those isolated instances of saints with human feelings in the Romish Church. There is one Italian whom I should like you to know, Paul Sarpi, who, while acting as a lay-brother in a monastery, was a genuine Protestant. You will easily be able to procure an account of him. One appeared as a pamphlet about ten years ago, by Ferdinand Delbrück, and is said to be very well written. I have read an Italian life of him lately, written by a Venetian, his contemporary. If any one wishes to know how the Papists behave, when they want to disseminate opinions respecting those who think differently from themselves, let him read in this book the reports spread by the Court of Rome about the death of this saint, and the infamous lies about Luther in Bellarmine's Catechism.

1819.

NIEBUHR had now been more than two years in Rome, yet the instructions, that were to form the basis of his negotiations with the Papal Court, were still delayed. He was further annoyed by rumours—which however were not realized—that the Prussian government intended to associate Bartholdy, the consul at Florence, with him in the negotiation. Niebuhr was decided to take his leave should this prove to be the case.

In this, and the following years of his residence in Rome, Niebuhr passed the months of May, September, and October, at Tivoli or Albano. His principal literary production this year, was an Essay on the Historical Advantages to be derived from the Armenian Version of the Chronicle of Eusebius, occasioned by the recent publication of the Armenian version, discovered in the convent of St. Lazarus, at Venice, and edited under the auspices of Mai. This Essay was written for the Academy of Sciences in Berlin. He also edited the Fragments of Livy, which he had only delayed so long because he did not choose to submit his work to the censorship of a Dominican, from the necessity of which his high position did not exempt him, while it would have given offence in Rome to have published it elsewhere. He now waived this objection, because he feared that Mai who was just appointed librarian at the Vatican, would publish a bad edition of them, if not forestalled by a better. They appeared in the spring of 1820.

In July, partial instructions at length arrived, but the general ones were still kept back, which vexed him all the more as he was now beginning seriously to think of returning to Germany, on account of his wife's ill health, and extreme dislike to Italy. For his own part, his health had been better, after the first year, than at any former period of his life.

Letters written in 1819.

CCL.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 14*th April*, 1819.

You are decidedly against Gretchen's travelling without me, and consider such a separation as a voluntary renunciation and slighting of the nearest relationships. I should think it as wrong as you do, unless it were justified by the weightiest reasons, and you may well conceive that I could not suffer Gretchen and the children to travel alone, without the greatest anxiety, or be separated from them without a great sacrifice on my part. But her state of health is not only very unsatisfactory in general; she is unquestionably threatened with amaurosis. In fact, the effects of this climate on a nervous constitution are something of which you can form no idea out of Italy, and of which a person utterly ignorant of medicine, who has personally seen and observed them, has a much clearer comprehension than the greatest physician can have who has never visited Italy. Would the father of our Brandis ever have believed that travelling in the mountains could be beneficial to his son? And again, others who also are suffering from chest disorders, would be destroyed by living at a height of 600 feet above the sea; while others die in a few weeks in the sea air of Naples, to which they have been ordered by German and English physicians to keep off consumption. The physician who accompanies

Prince Metternich on his travels, a very clear-headed and well-informed man, finds himself quite at sea in all the cases that come under his notice here. The number of Germans who suffer from mental disorders in Rome, is at least from ten to twenty times greater than in Germany among persons of the same rank, and occupied by the same classes of ideas. In one house, which is always let to Germans, five occupants in succession have become insane within the last sixteen years. In another country how can you form the slightest conception of the effects of the smells, or the sirocco? It is utterly impossible; and therefore you are unable to estimate the effect of this climate upon a delicate constitution, from your knowledge of that constitution in your own country; hence it is that natives and foreigners unite in urging a removal from Italy, as soon as a foreigner finds his health declining. For my own part, I have ransomed my health with a year of suffering, and now I should never think of changing my residence on my own account; only I find, as all others do without exception, that one can get through incomparably less work here than in Germany.

16th. I laid my sheet aside yesterday to dress for one of the court parties that are taking place almost daily here just now. You can easily conceive with what heart I can be there, when I leave my invalid in a solitude which she cannot enliven by any employment, but can only brood over her own sad thoughts and fears.

I shudder at what we see and hear of things in Germany. Kotzebue's murder, what an utterly insane act! Is the perception of what is right and wrong, lawful and atrocious, really so perverted in Germany, that voices can be raised in defence of such a deed? And even putting that aside, can the men be blind to the consequences of a deed so pregnant with calamity? Are they become so short-sighted? Cannot they foresee the impression that it will produce on the governments? Yet it is almost impossible to say this to the deluded men without being regarded as a blockhead, and proscribed.

CCLI.

TIVOLI, 21*st May*, 1819.

. . . . There would be many advantages in passing the summer here; but Gretchen cannot get baths; the walks (with the most glorious prospects) are without shade; and I should be obliged to leave her alone some days in every week, which would be very dull for her, as she can employ herself so little.

Bernstorf gives me a furlough of six or eight weeks. His letter is very friendly.

The inhabitants of Tivoli are the most arrant beggars on the face of the earth. They beg with laughing faces, attack the stranger, and abuse him violently if he gives them nothing. I have made the acquaintance of the richest man in the place; he is a usurer and a miser. The priests here seem to be certainly not better than the rest. I have met with one man, however, who is a fresh proof that the Italians might be raised, if they could be made small proprietors. He is a yeoman, who inherited from his father a house, a vineyard, and an olive-garden, but with debts far exceeding the market-price of his possessions; for small estates fetch such low prices, that the produce of a single year will often reach the half, or more, of the market-price; the land requires so much labour, that he who cultivates it by hired labourers can scarcely make both ends meet, in spite of the extraordinary proportion which the prices of products bear to the price of land here.

This honest man has so far extricated himself, by extraordinary industry and energy, that he has now only a few hundred dollars still owing of his debts, and can look forward to the time when he shall have worked them all off. "When I had earned a hundred dollars by the harvest," said he, "I was obliged to give up eighty, and wept with my children." He mortgaged his olive-garden for ten years to a usurer, who takes the whole produce, which, in good years, is equal to the capital lent, and receives besides ten per cent., which

the poor fellow has to get from his other pieces of land. What a state of society! And believe me, that, at most, I do not know more than one Roman who would be shocked at such facts as these. If the man cannot pay the two hundred dollars next year, his vineyard will be forfeited. If it is at all within my power I shall lend him the money. Wherever you find hereditary farmers, or small proprietors, there you also find industry and honesty. I believe that a man who would employ a large fortune in establishing small freeholds, might put an end to robbery in the mountain districts. The Italians are still, as in the time of the Romans, adapted simply and solely for agriculture. They are as little a poetical nation as the old Romans were; on the contrary, they are prosaic, and not even lively, as the Germans are in some districts. No nation can be less musical; they have only a ritornel melody, which is most unpleasant, and no national songs at all. The wisdom of the old Romans is strikingly displayed, among other things, with respect to the size of the separate estates, which was determined by law. Seven jugers are amply sufficient to feed and clothe a large family. On this extent they can perform all the tillage themselves, of which much more is needed than with us. The corn requires weeding. This work occupies the whole year, and there is no winter month when there is nothing to do in the fields. A larger estate is no benefit to an Italian, and he who lets his piece of land, and lives without work, is a lost man, as well as the poor fellow who can get no work. The mere day-labourer is also in a pitiable condition, and this class are, for the most part, a bad set; but it is from destitution. The great farmers hire them by the job, and, in order to save a little, many of them work themselves to death: in the summer, at least, the hospitals are always crowded with them. The rich learn nothing, and take no interest in anything. There is no, strictly speaking, burgher class at all; and nothing is rarer than to find artisans who understand their trade and are industrious. The priests are generally very poor and incredibly wicked. In Rome there are parish priests who go about begging. The monks are

certainly nearly all good for nothing, though I know one very estimable Franciscan. Learning and literature are at a lower ebb than perhaps in any other country. The devotion is merely external, and this has very much diminished. I have been assured by Italians themselves that the younger people have scarcely any faith at all. From the greatest to the least, all unite in hating and despising the government; but at Rome there are none, or very few, who cling, as so many in the other parts of Italy do, to the very pardonable chimera of the unity of Italy. I was conversing here with an intelligent landowner about the city and the inhabitants, and he drew a frightful picture of one after another of the most influential men, which had, however, quite an air of truth. As he had previously been blaming the government — unhappily with only too much justice—I asked him how any good could be done then, if those who would come into power on the fall of the priestly domination were so bad? He acknowledged that no amelioration at all could be anticipated. The small holdings are swallowed up year by year, and thus the number of vagabonds in the towns is constantly increasing.

If one could but penetrate further into the retreats of the agricultural population! It is only among them that any addition to our knowledge of antiquity could be obtained.

Bunsen and his wife have been with us about ten days. He and I have been visiting ruins, that no stranger has ever visited before, and which are very remarkable.

CCLII.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

ROME, *3rd July*, 1819.

From Schmieder's official letter and mine, you will see, dear Nicolovius, that our evangelical worship has been happily commenced, and truly "in God's name." The 27th of June will be a notable day henceforward in church history; for what Protestant worship there had been in Rome previously, was destitute of all spiritual power.

That ours will prosper under such an excellent clergyman

is certain. I think I have always known what a genuine pastor must be, who should in our days raise up a church, and infuse into her a new life, but I had never seen such a one till we became acquainted with Schmieder. I cannot tell you how we all love and reverence him.

It will not occasion offence; I spoke to the Pope after the first Sunday, when he had, no doubt, been informed of all that passed, and he was as friendly as ever; I had a favour to request for a friend of mine from the Secretary of State, but he declined saying anything to the Pope about it, and told me that I had better apply to him myself, he would certainly not refuse me; and he did not.

The *prêtraille* do, indeed, cavil much at our burial-ground. The most perplexing circumstance to us will be, if apostates should want to return to us; one has announced his intention of doing so already; you may rely upon it that we shall act with due forethought and circumspection.

I only wish that Schmieder had his wife with him. As he will receive 200 dollars increase of salary, and the congregation can do something for him, she must come. He is so made to be happy and to confer happiness, that he ought not to be subjected to this cruel separation. We shall do what we can towards the expenses of travelling and removal; as I shall now remain here till next March, I shall be able to spare something towards it. But the 200 dollars may be regarded as certain if his wife comes.

I earnestly intreat an answer by return of post if possible. I cannot tell you how I long for freedom. Here I have been too long compelled to be on friendly terms with despicable men, for the sake of the service, and the relations which it involves; and I grow more and more acutely sensible that these gentlemen despise all that is good in me, and despise me myself on account of the evil that is not in me. . . . .

CCLIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 17*th July*, 1819.

. . . . You will be glad to hear that I have gained courage and energy to undertake an historical work of some magnitude, and that I have nearly brought it to a conclusion. Namely, I have made a collection of the previously unknown facts and dates occurring in the fragments of the Armenian translation of the Chronicles of Eusebius, which have been recently discovered, and collated them with others already known, but frequently very obscure. By this process, the history of the earliest periods of the Babylonian empire, that of the Assyrian empire, and that of the Macedonian dynasties after Alexander, will in many parts gain considerably in clearness and extent. The light thus thrown on many points, completes the refutation of those who maintain that Herodotus only knew history as an assemblage of unconnected legends, and had no definitely arranged chronological outline before his eyes; the new facts furnish the greater part of the materials necessary for a work on all the races and states standing in connexion with Rome—a work which cannot be incorporated into the continuation of the Roman History, but must be present to my thoughts in a distinct shape. I do not so completely despair of this continuation, since I have found that I *can* write, and in a much more impressive style than in better times, although very slowly. But it is terribly laborious to write here, because you not only have to go to the public library for every book which you do not yourself possess, but have to contend with the indolence of the Italians, as soon as you require several books in order to look out single scattered passages. Until lately, I had very seldom had occasion to visit the library where the printed philological works are generally to be found, and the regular librarian does not know who I am; hence, he has lately treated me with great ill-humour for giving him so much trouble. The librarians are Dominicans, one of the most repulsive of the monastic orders. . . . .

Schmieder lives and boards with us, and will continue to do so until his wife comes, which will probably be in the autumn. It is my earnest wish that this noble-minded man may enjoy the happiness which he deserves. I have at last received partial instructions. I fear, however, that the Pope is near his end, and then it will be again impossible to do anything. In that case, the instructions could not be executed in their present form, and I have in the first place to report this to my government.

CCLIV.

ROME, 13*th August*, 1819.

No intelligence has reached me since the unhappy occurrences in Berlin.*

Here we have only very confused accounts of the arrests, and the search after papers. The seizure of Reimer's † will have made you uneasy on my account also. Not that you would think me capable for a moment of harbouring criminal designs against the State, or rash ones against the existing ministry. But you will fancy the possibility of strong expressions of vexation. It will set you at ease when I tell you that I have not written to Reimer at all for more than a year, that I have at no time written frequently to him, and that my letters were always short and of no political importance. Neither my wishes nor my hopes were in unison with his.

To Schleiermacher and Arndt I have never written.‡ I

* This refers to the investigations which were set on foot after the murder of Kotzebue, by Sand, to discover the revolutionary conspiracy with which his deed was supposed to be connected. It was afterwards fully proved that he had acted under the impulse of maddened fanaticism without any external instigation; but the government, at this time, fancied that the whole Burschenschaft was a secret association which aimed at the overthrow of the existing authorities, and, therefore, all those who were in any way connected with it were called to account.

† Reimer was a publisher in Berlin, and an intimate friend of Niebuhr's.

‡ Schleiermacher's papers were soon restored to him; but Arndt was less fortunate. He was suspended from his professorship, and his papers were detained for several years.

am ready to take oath that, according to my full belief, not one of these three is connected with anything that could be reasonably called a secret association, still less a conspiracy. Reimer may have used unwarrantable expressions, and has made himself bitter enemies by his never-ending squabbles with the censorship.

Schleiermacher may have said unsuitable things on unsuitable occasions, but he has never been an advocate of revolution any more than Arndt, and I remember his saying to my Milly and me, when all these ideas were first beginning to ferment, that he shuddered to think of them. 'As far as his papers are concerned, I am quite easy about him. I am less so about Reimer's; I fear misinterpretation (firmly as I am convinced of his innocence), because he often formed connexions for a time with hot-headed men, till he perceived that there was nothing to be done with them. Still, nothing can be brought to light worthy the name of a crime. His credit may, however, be seriously injured by such an affair and such an interruption to his business.

Whether there exists any sort of conspiracy among the young men, I do not know; it does not seem to me impossible; at all events there is a fanatical political sect, which is more dangerous than a conspiracy, because it has roots that cannot be destroyed except by ploughing up the soil itself—a course not to be expected of governments which have allowed the evil to grow up under their own eyes, without counteracting it by wisdom and virtue. And this would have been possible. In 1814, the ground was cleared and ready to bear fruit; but no seed was sown, and so of course weeds shot up in rank luxuriance. Nothing can exonerate those who neglected their duty at that time from the blame of these results. Then, love dwelt in every heart, and all were ready to welcome whatever was noble and good. Now, the tone of public feeling has degenerated, and God knows how it is to be raised. To me, our democrats are as hateful as lackeys aping the ways of a despot.

CCLV.

ROME, *28th August*, 1819.

Since I wrote to you this day week, your missing letter has come to hand, after a week's delay. Even the communications which I have received from the ecclesiastical authorities, have been opened without ceremony and detained on the road, of which I have made bitter complaints to my minister. I conjecture that it takes place at Frankfort.

You say that a life in Germany would now afford me little that was cheering, and I, too, clearly perceive this. In fact, I should unquestionably remain here in spite of all that I risk by doing so (about which I wrote to you), if there were any hope that Gretchen's health could be re-established, or even improve in this country. Whether this will be the case in Germany, we do not know, but we must make the experiment. I believe that you yourself will pronounce me in the right, if, after a full consideration of all the reasons against this step, I decide to take it as a duty towards my poor Gretchen. Indeed I assure you that I could not do it without great sacrifices on my part, consequently am in no danger of being seduced by inclination. I have gained access here to papers which are preserved in a building where you cannot work in winter; believe me, I should resign them very unwillingly, and all the more so, as it may be anticipated that, since they have lain there for eighty years untroubled, they may probably remain unnoticed for ever, unless I profit by them. They are critical collections of extracts from manuscripts of Cicero's Orations, with the criticism of which I have been busily engaged ever since the winter, and of which with these aids I should be able to publish a regular edition. I have acquired a taste for critical researches into language, which formerly I was far from possessing.

The aspect of things in Germany is certainly in every respect unfriendly and discouraging. You cannot unite with any party, and a man of clear and correct views finds enemies on every side. I really look upon it as a blessing that I am not in Berlin at this moment; that is, if

the unhappy circumstances which have occurred there could not have been averted, of which, however, I am not so fully convinced, if I could have taken a part in public affairs. Unfortunately our men do not perceive that in this case no coercive measures can avail; indeed nothing can do good but a government whose wisdom and virtue should put the deluded to shame, and win over and appease the universities. My despatches have often given me an opportunity of expressing my views respecting the inward disease of all States; and while no man can find so much as a pretext for denouncing me as an adherent of revolutionary sentiments, I have openly expressed my sense of the deficiencies of our government.

I have sought to make it intelligible that they are presuming and seeking for a conspiracy where there is a sect. The latter is perhaps more dangerous than the former, but it cannot be crushed, even if composed of men of a different stamp from those who took part in this hazardous enterprise among us; a crusade against them is as fruitless as against a religious sect. Much has been done in ignorance; did the governments take the right course, they would rule over loving subjects, and a few fiery heads, such as always exist, would find no materials on which to work. Now, when the sect has acquired firmness and consistency, the only prudent course is to soothe them by adopting wise and good measures, neither yielding to them, nor yet directly irritating them. There has never yet been a sect which did not contain some grain of truth, and this grain is what we must seek to appropriate; if we do so, the residuum of folly and perverseness will fall to pieces of itself before a firm yet kind opposition; but if you attack it, just as it stands, you often find it invincible, and at all events place yourself in a very dangerous position. I do not by this mean to deny that there may be some actual plotters behind the scenes; but the number of such cannot be great, and they will no doubt know how to keep themselves concealed.

I am again throwing myself with full energy into all kinds of occupation, and to a certain extent with success. In fact

by this means I grow calmer, and more able to forget the annihilation of all bright visions in the social world. I have finished my treatise on the historical acquisitions afforded by the Chronicles of Eusebius, which, among other things, contains the account of a whole period of the history of the Seleucidæ. It has almost grown into a small book.

This is a very unhealthy season. Thank God we keep free from the prevailing distempers. The numerous cases of sickness keep our dear, active Schmieder fully employed. There are many German artisans here, particularly from Switzerland, with their wives and families. Their misery at such a time is inconceivable, and hitherto they have often taken these poor creatures into the hospitals, and when there, if they refused to change their religion, have left them for days together without attention or food. The establishment of our Church will remove a part of this misery; it will procure the means of help, and the poor will know to whom they may look for assistance. I cannot say too much of Schmieder's conduct in this, as in every other work. I feel much more happy in my own mind since he has been here. You see in him what genuine piety in any form makes of a noble spirit. . . . .

CCLVI.

ROME, 17*th September*, 1819.

I did not write to you this day week, because I was ill, and did not know whether it might not become serious; but I have been restored by prompt remedies.

I do not know whether you have heard that a pamphlet has appeared in Paris, upon the so-called secret associations in France, which is written in a very good spirit, but, to judge from the extracts in the newspapers, contains many errors and inaccuracies, as to matters of fact. My name is mentioned in it, but with respect. Although, however, it does not speak of me as belonging to the *Tugendbund*, it is very unpleasant to me to find it stated, that, in 1813, Gneisenau, Humboldt, and I, gave our approbation to the principles of

this society. Now as I can stake my life upon it that I never was connected with any association, and malicious persons could easily take occasion from it to represent my former declarations as falsehoods, I felt much tempted to insert a letter on the subject in the French newspapers. I gave up the idea afterwards, because the ill-intentioned, who have always some misinterpretation at hand, would immediately have said that I sought to exculpate myself through fear, and because, in my position, I cannot openly express my feelings about the state of affairs.

And besides, even if I had not been held back by my position as a servant of the State, other obstacles would have been in the way. Much as I disapprove of the course that has been taken, I could not publicly acquit many of my friends of having acted so that appearances were against them, nor of cherishing very perverted, although not guilty, sentiments.

This opens a mournful prospect for me if I return to Germany. A sober man among drunkards is in a horrible position. Now my convictions are still the same as those which I expressed many years ago, and by which I drew down upon myself such absurd and venomous attacks from the Liberal party;—that the change of forms which is necessary, and would save us, cannot properly affect the sovereignty, but only the administration; that the evils from which we are suffering, so far as they are the work of the executive power, are not connected so exclusively with the persons of those who are now in office, but that we should be certain to experience the same again, or others, after the introduction of any representative system whatever; that the source of our maladies lies in our national manners and tone of thought. Each man wants to govern, and thinks he can do it extempore; if you doubt his capacity, he feels himself insulted. But no one is ready to bear burdens for the community. Everywhere men make the most unreserved claims to a comfortable life at the cost of the State; and this is, in fact, with most the source of their desire for change, coupled, however, with a different and far more innocent motive,

namely, such a long familiarity with scenes of violent change and excitement, that their minds have grown habituated to them. . . . .

CCLVII.

TIVOLI, 1*st October*, 1819.

To-day I have some news to tell you, which is of no slight importance to me. I have received an official announcement that my instructions are about to be sent off. This renders it nearly impossible for me to carry out my proposal of requesting my recal in December. Had I not to consider Gretchen's health, it might and would give me much gratification to find myself at last engaged on more important business; for a life in Germany to me would now be scarcely the shadow of my old life there. I look upon myself as one forgotten in my own country; while here, the Pope and the Cabinet show me the most marked respect, kindness, and confidence. My health has improved; my powers have been refreshed by the work I have just gone through; and I am ready at least to make an attempt to resume my History. If this attempt should not prove as successful as formerly, it will not be wholly fruitless; and I shall have eased my conscience by the endeavour to fulfil a sacred duty towards my Milly. I have no fear of finding myself unable to conduct the negotiation well and skilfully; but now comes one great drawback: people in Germany make such absurd demands on the results of such a negotiation, that it is utterly impossible to satisfy them; and when the affair is brought to the only practicable conclusion, I shall be decried without mercy. They imagine that if we only set to work in the right way, we might succeed in driving the Roman Court to renounce its principles and its pretensions, and to leave the bishops so free that they could regulate the Church according to their own pleasure; and that, failing in this, the governments ought to break off all connexion with Rome, and take the whole settlement of the Church into their own hands. But such people do not reflect that only a very small party among the Catholics

would agree to such a course; and that in many districts, particularly in the Rhenish provinces and Westphalia, nothing would so infallibly excite discontent and disaffection among the King's subjects as this compulsory emancipation; for, though, doubtless, there would be no lack of persons willing to undertake the office of bishops, yet as such bishops would be schismatic, all true Catholics would consider every rite performed by them, or by any priest consecrated by them, as unlawful, nay, criminal. But, however difficult it may be to content both parties, this negotiation is indispensable; and if it be at last brought to a happy conclusion, so many evils will be obviated, that from this higher motive I shall derive satisfaction from it, though it may occasion much that is unpleasant for me.

But Gretchen's health! . . . .

CCLVIII.

ROME, 20*th October*, 1819.

We returned to town again on Saturday, and it was well we did, for the autumn rain has been pouring down in torrents ever since. The severe and premature cold weather almost spoiled our stay on the slopes of the Apennines. Gretchen has been obliged to give up the grape cure. The children grew quite robust there. Amelia has at last taken courage to go alone; she speaks much earlier than Marcus. The dear fellow is not at all jealous, and readily gives way to his sister; he fondles her with intense delight, and calls her *Amà mia!* He is a remarkably good child.

The Carlsbad decrees* have made a most mischievous impression on the Germans here, who are mostly young men,

* During the agitation occasioned by Kotzebue's murder and the investigations to which it gave rise, Metternich and Hardenberg agreed to fill up the chasms left in the Act of Confederation of 1815, and, for this purpose, to hold ministerial conferences at Carlsbad, to which plenipotentiaries from all the German states were invited. The conferences began towards the end of July. Their results were communicated to the Frankfort Diet, and the measures based upon them were all brought in and accepted unanimously in one day. They consisted—

I. Of the appointment of a commission to watch over the execution of the

and many of them possessed by wild dogmas; from this we may easily gather the effect they will produce in Germany. A favourable impression they cannot make on any unbiassed mind. It is equally severe and unjust to have recourse to severe and coercive measures against a sect, which your very violence converts into a party, without in the least reforming your own proceedings, without redressing a single real grievance. How utterly without love, without patriotism, without joy,—how full of discontent and grudge must life be, where this is the relation between the subjects and the governments! Our rulers do not perceive that Prussia can only subsist upon a moral and spiritual basis. I know very well whose spiritual children the democrats are; I know that you cannot allay their wild clamour, however well you govern, unless you do them the favour of adopting their senseless plans; but they would be detached from the people at large, if the latter found that they were governed wisely and well.

decrees of the Diet, which were to supersede the existing authorities in any German state, in case of an opposition on the part of the latter.

II. Measures were to be taken to watch over the universities, and put down any indication of a revolutionary spirit among either the students or the professors.

III. A rigid censorship of the press was to be established.

IV. The appointment of a Central Committee for the investigation of all democratic attempts was decreed. This committee sat at Mayence, and had power to cause the arrest of persons on suspicion, in any part of Germany, and have them brought to Mayence, and detained there as long as might be found necessary.

1820.

In July, 1820, Niebuhr at last received his instructions, after having waited for them four years. They arrived at a moment very unpropitious for negociation, for the revolution in Naples broke out on the 7th of July, and it was rumoured, that on the 17th, a similar rising was to take place at Rome, in accordance with a plan previously concerted with the insurgents of Naples. The expectation of an Austrian intervention prevented the revolt in Rome from coming to a head, but it could not secure the inhabitants from the risk of a sudden incursion of the bands of robbers who had been collected and organised in large bodies by the Neapolitan Carbonari. There were very few troops in Rome, and none whose fidelity could be relied on.

Under these painful circumstances Madame Niebuhr was confined of a daughter on the ninth of August.

Niebuhr's position was very trying, as he could neither leave Rome so long as the Pope remained there, nor send his wife and children away without him, while, in the city, they lived in constant fear of being attacked by brigands and plundered, or carried off as hostages. At the same time, it was necessary to proceed with the negociations, for which, however, the Roman government had little attention to spare at such a moment. This state of anxiety lasted till the arrival of the Austrians in the February following.

During this autumn, Niebuhr was also involved in some very unpleasant literary disputes. His edition of

the fragments he had discovered in the Vatican in 1816, had come out in May. About the same time, a Codex was discovered by Peyron in Turin, which confirmed the arrangement of the fragments of Cicero's Oration for Scaurus, to which Niebuhr had been led by his own study of them. The Abbé Mai, who could not forgive Niebuhr for having found so many defects in his edition of Fronto, and of the Armenian Eusebius, and regarded him with envy as a fortunate rival in the path of discovery, accused him in a public journal of having learnt from the Turin MS. what he had put forth as an original conjecture. Niebuhr was about to publish an indignant defence, when Mai was persuaded by his friends, who represented to him the consequences of his proceeding, to retract and apologise for his statement in the same journal. On this Niebuhr agreed to take no further notice of the matter. The same charge was, however, repeated, and in a much more malignant manner, soon after in the "*Bibliotheca* Italiana." This he could not leave unanswered, and therefore printed a pamphlet in which he refuted the statement by the clearest proofs. In January 1821, Niebuhr received a letter from Peyron, stating, that though he had discovered the fragments in question in the previous March, he had not found the key to their arrangement, which was the subject of the accusation, until September; consequently, not until three months after Niebuhr's edition had been in print. Peyron announced his intention of inserting this letter in a Roman journal; the permission to do so was at first refused out of consideration to Mai, but Niebuhr

succeeded at length in extorting it from the government, which he would hardly have accomplished but for his official position.

In spite of the unsettled state of political affairs, the concourse of foreigners at Rome, in the winter of 1820, was unusually large. Prince Henry of Prussia, Prince Christian of Denmark, and the Crown Prince of Bavaria, with many other distinguished personages, spent the winter there. This rendered it necessary for Niebuhr to enter into society so much more than he had done hitherto, that he was scarcely able to carry on his studies at all. He had, however, the great pleasure of receiving a visit from Stein and his two daughters in December, and conversing once more with the great statesman upon the political topics that still lay nearest to his heart.

Letters written in 1820.

CCLIX.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 1*st January*, 1820.

I cannot allow the coincidence of the New Year and the post-day to pass without sending you a greeting, although it must be very short; for to us this New Year begins like the last, with a severe illness of Gretchen's. She bears it with admirable patience, but it is a great calamity to us all. I do not think that she is in any danger, but what a life it is that she leads, and for me too? And what comfort have the poor children of their mother?

Thus our immediate prospects on entering the New Year, are but gloomy; gloomy like our sky, in which the sun has seldom appeared for the last three months. As concerns the world at large, I shut my eyes to the future. I have

never deviated from the straight path since the times have grown so difficult any more than I did previously, and I shall continue to walk in it with unswerving footsteps. So long as two months ago, I expressed my sentiments directly and openly to the King, on occasion of the well-known circular;* I wrote unreservedly to the minister when the first arrests took place; since then I have expressed myself with equal freedom to the Crown Prince—I, whom the revolutionists, no doubt, call an enemy of freedom. And I shall continue to act with the same openness and leave the consequences in God's hand. . . . .

I must conclude, because my Marcus, who has been waiting patiently for nearly an hour, is now begging me with tears to come and play with him. Let me commend my dear angel children to your affection.

CCLX.

ROME, 22*nd January*, 1820.

. . . . The deadening influence of the climate of modern Rome is not common to many places in Italy, but wherever there is a similar climate, wherever this sirocco prevails, you see the same intellectual results. I will not remind you of the fact that Rome remained quite barbarous up to the fifteenth century, but the stagnation of mind, and the incapacity for all deeper insight and classical thought, which has displayed itself in later times, is by no means to be ascribed exclusively, or even chiefly to the government and its form. From that time to this, Rome has produced no poet, no great author of any description, not even artists, with one exception; only one great philologist, and he has written no connected work of magnitude. Pisa has just such a climate as Rome, and, while at Florence the human mind was exhibiting the greatest activity and life in every direction, no man of intellect has arisen at Pisa, and all the great works of art, which the

* A circular, by which the different ambassadors were called upon to state their views with regard to the general political condition of Germany.

wealth of that city has called into existence, have been executed by foreigners. . . . .

I think you will not hear without interest, that the republic of Geneva has sent me the freedom of the city. With a good deal of trouble, I had succeeded in obtaining a papal decree separating the Catholic community of Geneva from the diocese of Chambery, and transferring it to the bishopric of Freiburg, in spite of the violent opposition of the court of Turin. Trifling and insignificant as the matter must appear to those unacquainted with the circumstances, you would not easily find, even among the most intricate negociations, one beset with greater difficulties. This title of citizenship gives me quite a different sort of pleasure from any honour that could flatter my vanity; though we shall all probably think very differently now of him who gave celebrity to the title *citoyen de Genève*, from what we did thirty years ago. They also offered me a present of 8000 francs, which I declined on the spot. Do not let us question whether this decision might not possibly arise from an impure motive, instead of, as I think, from a pure and disinterested sentiment of honour; I really only know that it seemed to me unbecoming to accept such a recompense and to sell my services. You, who know me so thoroughly, will believe me when I say this.

What do people say now to the state of things in France? I have the sheets still by me, in which I exposed the absurdities and inevitable consequences of the electoral law, and experience has justified every one of my predictions.

If you can find a German translation of the History of the Revolution in Naples, in 1799, read it. From that, you will see with your own eyes, what hopeless ruin is brought about by the want of sound practical sense, even in good men, who have been embittered by a bad government and are filled with chimeras. I know nothing more excellent of its kind.

Snow has lain on the ground for two days. Such an occurrence puts the Romans beside themselves. All the schools, libraries, &c. are closed. Marcus is full of glee at this strange sight, and plays with it, as the children do with us.

CCLXI.

ROME, *5th February*, 1820.

The detention of your letter beyond the limits of the long-past interval of delay assigned, is not only a subject of regret to me this time, but, coupled with the unceremonious opening of your last, it makes me uneasy on several accounts. In the first place, I fear lest those whose office it is to inspect letters at Frankfort, should suppress yours entirely, of which there have been instances; in the next, that by twisting the sense they may use it as a *corpus delicti*. Let us, however, be rather more cautious in the exposition of our feelings and views, and thus avoid, for God's sake, the interruption of a correspondence without which I cannot live.

. . . . [After repeating his reasons for leaving Rome, he thus proceeds]:—

I hope that you too will see that I could not act otherwise. I am well aware of what I sacrifice if I go; my health has improved, &c. Do not fancy either, that I imagine that in another climate, and under different personal relations, my intellect would once more become what it was. That depended upon other conditions. I am now a lopped tree, which may put forth green boughs again, but whose glory has departed with its spreading branches.

That I look forward to the decision with an anxious and heavy heart, you will conceive. And besides that, there are so many other things to make me feel anxious and sad. A storm seems gathering on the frontiers of Germany; and though I have rejoiced that in France a man had found the place which Nature called him to occupy, and have hoped it would be possible to arrest the spirit of revolution which an ambitious man had called up, in order to keep the reins of a power for which he had no vocation, a short time longer in his hands; I fear now that the destroying fates will triumph in that country. And, however deeply we must abhor the tyranny in Spain, no immediate redemption can be expected from a revolt, followed by the proclamation of the most

senseless constitution that was ever hatched, but only misery and civil war.

I am an anti-revolutionist, and from principle; but I am so likewise from my antipathy to revolutionary ideas, which would be in themselves repugnant to me, such as they are when conceived in shallow brains, even if they led to no results whatever. At the same time, however, I hope you will give me credit for the most decided hatred to despotism, though I would not attempt, nor do I think it possible, to counteract it by evoking the demon of revolution. Dreaming will do no good; we must think: and we must rather resign ourselves to an evil, than wish the gates of hell to open upon us. But believe me, I am not so unfair as to condemn those who merely dream, and wish this in their dreams, though I could weep tears of blood that such errors should be possible. I know that noble minds may be thus led astray; but when the confusions they excite, deprive us all of the modicum of liberty still left to us, I have a right to be indignant. I am not now referring to the bad men who form the ring-leaders; they are morally criminal; wisdom would not treat them as politically criminal, even if some among them are so, on which I will not decide, for if you touch them, you make martyrs of them. The only salvation would be to rule with conscientiousness, virtue, and love; and by this means the goal would infallibly be reached; and on our side, to become better, more virtuous, and more contented. No government could succeed, in the long run, in carrying out pernicious measures against a strong people, inspired by good and noble sentiments, and fulfilling its duties faithfully and conscientiously. To wish to bring about a better state of things by revolutions which generally owe their origin to the base motives of their leaders, and in which bad means are invariably resorted to, is to pay homage to the jesuitical maxim, that it is lawful to make use of bad means to accomplish a (supposed) good object. I shall adhere to these principles, although I foresee that malice will persuade folly, on the one side that I am a revolutionist, on the other hand, that I am a foe to freedom. Strange!

that I am not misunderstood in France and England, where I am daily becoming better known.

Not to conceal from you the good qualities of Rome, I must tell you that the spring is already so far advanced, that at this moment, some hours after sunset, a knot of the common people are singing under the windows of my room (in which I have no fire) with the guitar: the Carnival has begun, and does impart some vivacity to these inanimate Italians.

I am very tender-hearted to-day; I have had an affecting dream, which transported me to past times with such vividness, that their scenes have been floating before me all day with a half reality. . . . .

CCLXII.

ROME, *25th March*, 1820.

This time too, the apprehensions aroused by the non-arrival of your dear affectionate letter have been happily dispelled.

I could wish that our authorities would make it a maxim, as much as possible, to promote the sons of landed proprietors in the army in preference to others. This is not a question of the possession, or absence, of noble birth, but of a particular species of fixed and independent property. For people who possess a fixed and independent income, the army is a worthy occupation, which they may resign without becoming a burden on the State, and then live with dignity in the country. It is in this way, and by filling offices like those of the Justices of the Peace in England, that the *gentry* becomes respectable; with a genuine *gentry* all depends upon these characteristics, not upon what we generally understand by the term nobility. The war has left us far too many young officers without property, many of whom have been withdrawn from other professions. The great point is, that each should have a fixed mode of life, an appropriate calling; so that the people at large may not wander from the manifold paths of

human activity, and throw themselves on the one road of governing. On questions respecting the State, and the highest subjects of this high art,—for which there is a peculiar talent, and an aptitude for cultivation just as much as for the other arts, and which is just as rare as other talents,—dogmas are now enunciated with an arrogance, and a superficiality which must provoke, or grieve all men of penetration. People praise and decry without knowledge of mankind, without insight into political science, without understanding the aims, the means, or the difficulties of their rulers.

That people should form a correct judgment respecting persons and circumstances with which they never come in contact, no one can demand; but we have a right to demand, that those who have not the means of seeing to the bottom, should express their opinions modestly. Under the terror of wild revolutions, all Europe is congealing into an iron despotism, and Germany is drifting towards foreign servitude.

Spain, likewise! For King Ferdinand no punishment can be too severe;* but, remember my prophecy; the constitution, if really carried out, cannot subsist six months: such a monster of anarchy! A great part of the country, nay, whole provinces, have not the least wish for it; and, in this instance, too, no higher wisdom has been recognised than the idol of smooth uniformity, to which millions are required to sacrifice their feelings and their freedom! In such a case, nothing but a military government can exist, and even under such a rule one leader must contend with another, until one gains the victory, and in his turn comes to be overthrown.

We are tending towards that condition in the Roman Empire, when absolute sovereigns reigned without hereditary succession. Our hereditary monarchies are a blessing, which will be recognised when it is lost. Not that every hereditary dynasty is so—in Spain, for instance, it has greatly sinned. But that any sudden catastrophe is the greatest misfortune, I feel with the fullest conviction.

* A military insurrection in the January of this year had proved successful, and Ferdinand had been compelled to swear to the constitution of the Cortes.

CCLXIII.

ROME, *6th May*, 1820.

I think you, too, would allow that one could hardly find a better and more amiable child than Marcus. He wins all hearts—his openness, his joyous sensibility, and the absence of all disagreeable ways, give everybody a steady liking for him. His little outbreaks of self-will, which never go so far as ill-temper, and the reproofs for them, which he receives with tears, are always followed by remarkably good behaviour. He is quite free from the ugly fault of covetousness. He daily shows indications of a good heart, which make me love him more and more. I trust that he will grow up a very simple character, without show and pretension. May God preserve his present fine and noble nature! I have not seen in him a single "spirituel" trait, and it may be, perhaps, that my father may in all respects live over again in him. He will have very good abilities for learning and retaining. He knows his letters. He does not yet take much interest in stories; but all the more in seeing things, and when I walk with him I tell him the names of everything, of buildings, &c. His perceptive powers are excellent. Thus, for instance, he distinguishes marble from travertine very correctly, and the latter often from peperine. The less lively his imagination is, so far, the less need I hesitate in reading the poets aloud to him, as soon as he likes to hear them. On this account, however, it is a pity that he is so backward in German, and that there is no readable Homer in Italian; else it must familiarise a child much more with the ancient poets, and bring them nearer to him, to be able to show him the statues in the museums. I shall for the present direct the whole course of his instruction mostly to visible and living objects.

You ask about Spain, and I think I can give you a very decided answer. The constitution deserves all the evil that is said of it, and is as wretched and shallow a piece of parchment, as has seen the light anywhere, since it has been the fashion for people to employ their odd hours in framing

constitutions; not to mention the fact, that it renders it impossible to retain America, whose share in the representation, even taking only the white population into account, is, in every point of view, so disproportionately small, that it remains practically without any part in the government, and is moreover absolutely compelled to protest against the uniformity of legislation. So too, the Cortes of 1810 drove the Americans to rebellion, and the greatest atrocities took place under their government in Mexico, while their fall brought Mexico into subjection again, just because they had been hated to the last degree. The equalisation of all the Spanish provinces of the peninsula is an absurdity, and as great an injustice towards Biscay, as were the violent measures which the Directory adopted to compel the Swiss to unity. Since the supreme power is placed without limitation in the hands of a hundred and eighty men, who are chosen on no other grounds, at least at present, than their political fanaticism and for speeches which sound magnificent to fools, nothing can be more certain than that the proceedings of such an assembly will be marked by a total want of wisdom, and the most arbitrary exercise of power. This would be the case, even if they found no opposition; but they will find opposition, and excite it; in the first place, from the provinces which find their privileges attacked, like Biscay, and from those which desire something quite different, namely, a federative republic, like Catalonia and Galicia; in the second place, from the chiefs of the army, who have already, in 1813, refused to obey an imperious and ridiculous assembly, and who, with some isolated exceptions, do not trouble themselves in the least about the constitution, but only care to get power into their own hands. If these parties should rise against each other, the now insignificent faction of the king, and the much more powerful one of the clergy, would mingle in the strife—gain nothing for themselves, but make confusion worse confounded.

The Spaniards, with the exception of the Catalonians, who differ little from the French, are divided into two classes, which are as different as any two nations; the people,

especially the inhabitants of the country, and the country towns, which, at least up to the time of the war, had remained nearly what they were four centuries ago; and the educated ranks, whose mental cultivation is entirely French. I am reading just now a survey of the Castilian poetry by Quintana, their most celebrated author, and it is really disgusting to see not only how entirely destitute he is of all feeling for the magnificence and genius of the Spanish literature, but how his own language is crammed with Gallicisms, so that his book, translated literally into French, would read like an original work, but one below the average of mediocrity. The Spaniards have never understood either how to obey or to command; certainly, not how to govern, except as despots; not only in the revolutionary war, but throughout the whole course of their old history, nothing has been accomplished by masses of men, but always by detached bands. They are the only nation whom you can call, in its essence—the common people—truly poetical; the cultivated classes have quite lost this beautiful characteristic, and have not acquired in its stead those qualities which cannot spring up where that exists. Pride has always been the distinguishing feature of the Spaniards; in the very heat of the revolutionary war, many generals were faithless to the common cause (although the number of actual traitors was extremely small), because they were too proud to take an inferior position. Hatred is much more common among them than love and friendship; the slightest offence converts friends into deadly enemies. These are no elements of freedom. Were it not for the compact power of France, I would wish nothing better for Spain than that she might become a federative State, since the monarchy has once for all been trifled away: only, without some special good fortune, I hardly think that such a State could sustain the first severe shock, and maintain itself till the people had become habituated to it. If King Ferdinand's conduct had not been quite so unbearable, a sudden convulsion in favour of absolute monarchy would have been very possible, such as took place in 1814, when there were universal rejoicings

over the fall of the Cortes (for the truth of this fact is quite certain); but he has acted too insanely.

One good trait of the Spaniards is integrity in money matters, and not a single accusation has ever been brought against the Cortes in this respect. How different is it here in Italy! What is to become of Italy, if a revolution break out, one cannot even imagine. Thoroughly bad as the government of the priests is, I declare with full conviction, that if the power were to fall into the hands of other classes here, the state of affairs would be incomparably worse.

During the last few days, I have been reading with great interest a quite forgotten, though printed pamphlet of the year 1420, entitled, "A Project for the Peloponnesus;" it furnishes a remarkable instance of how men look to revolutionary changes in the legislature for real help, in times of utter national decay, when in fact no resource remains, and improvement from such a quarter is a sheer impossibility. It contains the fundamental ideas of the French economists from the pen of a Byzantine scholar. . . . .

CCLXIV.

ROME, *24th June*, 1820.

. . . . I have been obliged to begin an entirely new and different life here from my earlier one, and this is a miserable thing. Perhaps I am better than you ever knew me; more patient, more self-sacrificing, freer from selfishness, more reasonable. If so, I owe it to having children to train, and to my duties towards the children and my poor Gretchen.

With regard to my political views and convictions, I have the repose of that unshakeable conviction which results from the immediate intuition of the truth; and opposite opinions do not irritate me, because they cannot perplex me for a moment. All comes to pass just as I had long ago foreseen and foretold, and all that I now foresee will also come to pass. There are men whom I have never seen, with whom I could act in perfect concert, because what they say and

think is as if it came from my inmost soul. Such an one is the minister de Serre, who saw as I did three years ago, then allowed himself to be led astray by yielding his conviction to that of his friends; whose heart is broken for his error; and who now presents, perhaps, the most tragic spectacle in Europe, that of a man who is sacrificing his life to atone for an error, although it is too late to remedy it, and that which is intended as a remedy is still an evil, though certainly of infinitely less magnitude. A year and a half ago, I said to a friend of de Serre, "Your friend will soon wish to buy back the words he has uttered with his life, but I cannot therefore cease to love and revere him."

The night before last, I read through a thick packet of pamphlets from Spain. What empty bombast, what miserable twaddling, what a dark night without a ray of hope! In Spain, there are perhaps many well-intentioned persons on the revolutionary side; hundreds of thousands are exasperated, and with justice. On the other side, there is, perhaps, nothing healthy and good; but the shallowness and incapacity of the well-meaning among the revolutionists throws their game into the hands of the rogues among them, and is in itself enough to ruin everything, They will strive after a republic with uniformity and despotism, and it will end with a military dictatorship. In the ministry, a second party have already attained the height of reputation, and even these are already beginning to decline.

. . . . I have had a literary pleasure in reading the Provençal Troubadours which have come out in France. They display a beauty such as I had never dreamed of. They are far above their reputation. The new poems of Lamartine are also beautiful. We can get nothing here from Germany, and for new books I am almost entirely limited to French literature.

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CCLXV.

ROME, *28th July*, 1820.

Three weeks ago, I wrote you in haste the news of the revolution that had suddenly broken out in Naples, and a fortnight ago, I sent you an equally hurried letter, saying that we are anticipating similar occurrences here. My silence will have made you uneasy, but it was impossible to write. . . . .

Our fear that a revolution would break out here also, was no chimera. A plan, intended to put the people into a ferment, was fortunately discovered and frustrated, and, by a still greater piece of good fortune, the leaders of the Neapolitan revolution, who had previously formed conspiracies through the whole of Italy as they found opportunity, had grown shy of carrying on proceedings which might draw down a storm on their own heads, while they might otherwise hope to remain undisturbed. Hence they rejected the proposals of the Roman malcontents, though they had stirred up a revolt at Beneventum and Pontecorvo only a week before. These circumstances give us some security; though security is not the right word, for any accident may cause the tempest to burst here too. The populace is extremely ill affected towards the government, and after all the changes that have taken place in the world, and in men's minds, an ecclesiastical government can scarcely have any stability in itself.

The army cannot be relied on; if it were not for that, we might sleep in peace, weak as it is in numbers; for without an external impulse which would justify our worst fears, the population of Rome will certainly not stir.

But things cannot remain quiet for any length of time, if the revolutionary party in Naples should maintain themselves in power, or if, as appearances betoken, the agitation there should resolve itself into a wild anarchy.

In the first case, the present authorities of Naples would gain courage, in which they are very deficient at present; in

the second, bands of men would force their way over the frontiers.

The Neapolitan revolution, accomplished apparently with such unanimity, and without acts of violence, as great pains are taken to report, may appear a very splendid affair at a distance, but seen near, it is a dreadful and melancholy occurrence. Not that the former government was good, and worthy of respect,—far from it; it was superficial and foolish; not tyrannical, but the taxes it imposed were very burdensome.

The revolution has been effected, on the one hand by ambitious officers, on the other, by the lodges of the Carbonari, who are in every respect the wildest and most execrable class of Jacobins. The two parties have worked side by side and together, but not for the same end. The most widely differing views prevail in the different provinces. Apulia, for instance, and others, want to secede, and form separate republics. This is, at bottom, the characteristic tendency of the Italians now, as in the middle ages. The idea of unity exists in some large towns among the very small class of educated persons, and those who hope to get higher and more lucrative posts in a larger State. It is espoused by the army. At the present moment, not a creature pays the taxes in the Neapolitan territory, and the State is obliged to pay not only the soldiers, but also the thousands of Carbonari who have enlisted in the ranks.

Among the new ministers, there is one whom I know well by reputation, and to some extent personally, Count Zurlo,* an excellent man, whom the King ought to have called in long ago; but already the Carbonari are calling for his head, and very likely he will have to be sacrificed. They are endeavouring, at Naples, to arm the most respectable citizens, and to turn the armed Carbonari out of the city. If they succeed in both attempts, and if General Pepe will lower the insolence of his tone, the government may maintain itself for a time till the Cortes assemble, when, indeed, the

* He had been minister under Murat.

confusion of Babel will certainly commence. Meanwhile, however, they are risking the defection of most of the provinces.

We know as yet very few details of the horrors of Palermo.* The people at Naples seek to draw a veil over them. So much is certain, that the massacres lasted five days; the troops fired upon the people; the soldiers were fired on from the houses, and even the nuns poured boiling water on them. National hatred and party hatred have had free scope. According to the smallest estimate, three thousand persons have perished. Seven hundred galley-slaves were let loose to assist in the attack on the soldiers. These united themselves afterwards with the dregs of the population in committing all imaginable atrocities. The Prince della Cattolia, a man of great beneficence, was murdered, and his head and limbs carried about on pikes. All the gates were shut, and there was no bread left in the town. It is conjectured, that the soldiers who were taken prisoners have died of hunger. This is revolution for you!

And we should have had just such scenes to expect here, where, besides the other prisoners, and the innumerable criminals who go about at large, eight hundred are shut up in houses of correction; and there is no army, nor national guard, that can be depended on. The most frightful case of all would be if the revolution here broke out among the populace, who would instantly begin to plunder. A military revolution passes over quietly, as far as private individuals are concerned.

The Carbonari in Naples would have arrested and murdered all the Sicilians of rank. Some of them the government has been obliged to send to a fortress, in order to save their lives.

At Benevento, murders have been committed out of sheer wantonness. This, too, would never have reached our ears, but that Benevento is a Papal town. The proclamations issued by those who are in authority there, show them to be

* The Sicilians did not trust the new constitutional government, and wished for the independence of Sicily. Their resistance continued for some time.

fellows of the lowest class; their chief had been previously in the galleys.

Under such circumstances, one can think of nothing else, and must be heavy-hearted. Then, too, there is the fear, which is becoming very general, that through the anarchy prevailing in Naples, the plague may be allowed to spread from Majorca to Italy. It is raging to a fearful extent in that island; whole villages have been depopulated, and the houses destroyed since by fire. But the *cordon* has been broken, and thus the whole island is probably infected.

It was most intensely hot weather here till Sunday evening, 30° Reaumur, in the sun up to 45°; and we have had no rain for two months. Either from this, or accidentally, or from incendiarism, some woods have caught fire; more than two square German miles, containing 25,000 olive trees, vineyards, &c., have been laid in ashes.

Under such circumstances, I have to conduct a negotiation, the issue of which would be problematical, even if everything were quiet; for which no one here has now any attention to spare, and at which I am nevertheless obliged to work as arduously, under the burden of the oppressive heat, as if we could look forward to a long and secure future. I have succeeded very well with the principal part of the business, but I have worked myself almost ill with it.

. . . . Moltke went to Naples some time since. Charles seems to be a noble-minded youth.

CCLXVI.

ROME, 23*rd September*, 1820.

You will ascribe it to the disturbances and my interruptions that I did not write last week.

Gretchen will tell you with her own hand about herself and our little Lucia. Amelia, sweet child, grows more and more affectionate in her ways. Marcus is always a source of joy to us. His nature is thoroughly good, and his faculties become more and more harmonious as they develope themselves. He has a very quick understanding. . . . .

You inquire the origin of the Carbonari. They were originally nothing more than a development of free-masonry, and it might perhaps be said that all the free-masons in Italy are Carbonari, or Guelphs, or Adolphs, &c., though the converse would not hold good; for the derived associations have attained a much wider extent than the parent society. When the French invaded Italy in 1796, and occupied Rome in 1798, Naples in 1799, the revolution had been prepared in the lodges of the freemasons, and, with a few exceptions, all the freemasons declared for it. The generation who were then growing up, without affection for anything, striving only after commotion, still harboured under the French rule a longing for ferment and change, while the elder generation, especially those whom we term cultivated people, attached themselves with joy to the government of Buonaparte, whose legislation afforded them the realization of all that according to their system they demanded as that without which there can be no salvation; viz.: new codes of law, equal inheritance, the removal of all corporations, convents, &c.; some of which measures were wholesome, some injudicious, and some vitally pernicious. When the name Carbonari came into use, I do not know; but the class already existed in the provinces under Murat. They did not, however, attain much importance till afterwards, when they were joined by the party of Murat, which certainly was a curious amalgamation. They have the greatest variety of objects, from the unity of all Italy under a Buonapartean, to her dissolution into a federative Republic. Of course, by far the majority of them simply follow their leaders blindfold, and large numbers have no object, that is, they only desire anarchy. The tendency to a federative republic prevails, however, to the greatest extent among those who have the most practical truth in their views, as it does in Spain and Portugal, which the revolutionists would divide into seven republics. To this the armies are opposed, except in so far as their chiefs may influence them on the condition of becoming presidents themselves. The conspiracy lately discovered at Naples to

murder the ministers, shows what we have to expect when the parliament shall be assembled. There are numbers of the clergy among the Carbonari, especially monks, who lost their taste for a conventual life during the secularization; they have many members, too, among the inferior nobility. A part of the higher nobles were with them also at first, attracted by the promise of an aristocratic constitution.

Our baby will be christened to-morrow in our chapel. She will be called Lucia Dorothea Elizabeth. Freddy, Cornelius, the Göschens, and the Bunsens are her sponsors.

CCLXVII.

ROME, *14th October*, 1820.

The time of terror is still deferred from day to day; the danger of contagion and of an internal explosion is dispelled by the assembling of the Austrian troops, but that of an invasion, which should throw everything into anarchy, is still as threatening as before: and, in such a case, one must either remain, or if flight were still possible, leave all one's possessions behind. Most people are careless enough to entertain no further apprehensions, because the invasion has been delayed beyond all expectation. Now it is certainly true, that the Neapolitans, if they have good counsel among them, and remember the events of the war between 1798 and 1815, must halt their army on their own frontier, where they can take up very advantageous positions. But this would not prevent a corps of Carbonari, with their followers, from coming here, as soon as the Austrians advance from the opposite side, and such an incursion is naturally much worse than the entrance of a tolerably disciplined army. One great thing is, that fugitives from hence would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to leave in a hurry, because hundreds of carriages would quit the city at once, and not more than twenty post horses are provided at any stage; eighty could not possibly be mustered, for no

horses are used in agriculture here, not to mention that the first four or five stages are in a desert. We must console ourselves with thinking that we might be still worse off. The Sardinian ambassador, a man whom I like much, has seven children and a very aged father in his house; the latter is so weak that he cannot bear the motion of a carriage, and has to be carried in a litter.

Will the Neapolitans offer a vigorous resistance? The army certainly will not; according to all appearances, it will present in the field nothing but scenes of disgraceful cowardice; it is certain that the soldiers have already displayed timidity. So too the Palermitans behaved miserably in the field. In Naples itself, a similar resistance may be offered to that in Palermo, where horrors occurred over which it is sought to draw a veil. The upper classes had fled from the city, and the lowest populace certainly fought with an heroic fury. This class, however, took far more interest in the matter than the corresponding class in Naples; for although every one is now enrolling himself among the Carbonari, it is only done in order to obtain recommendations, favours, or impunity for crimes. There will be no lack of assassinations, and shots from behind hedges.

The leaders reckoned on an insurrection in France, or they would not have ventured so far. They are a thoroughly bad set, but we must not refuse to admit that in the capital the cause has been joined by men of talent, of whom there is not in general such a deficiency in Naples as in Rome.

God only knows what the issue will be; tragic it must be in any case. The bloodlessness of this last revolution is a delusive appearance. Blood enough has flowed in Sicily alone, and many single murders have occurred in Naples, but have been hushed up. In Spain too, eight and twenty have been condemned to death at one time, and in many towns, fights have taken place which have been accompanied with loss of life; those executions are but the commencement. Paladini and his accomplices, who have been arrested at Naples, intended to assassinate the Ministers. For the

rest, in Spain civil war is inevitable; whole districts are opposed to the new order of things; whole provinces wish, on the contrary, for a federative republic, and on the third and following days, Riego and his companions intended to murder the King and Prince Carlos, and to depose the Ministers; and at the same time, another revolutionary party planned to take advantage of the indignation excited by these machinations to put an end to the Cortes, and overthrow these same ministers. All hope of founding a system of order and law is lost in this horrible confusion. If the revolution take root, one can only look for a military rule, or, after long unspeakable conflicts and misery, for a republic on the American footing, which is, in truth, the most unprofitable and distasteful to all the wants of our heart and intellect which can be imagined. All higher individuality, nay, all true private life disappears, where only low political interests are the ruling topic, and barbarism draws close upon us.

It is impossible but that the coquetting with Catholicism, which is now in fashion among a certain class, should come to an end; it is altogether too untruthful and revolting a comedy. Here in Italy, faith in the Church has so completely died out, that the mummy would fall into dust at the first hard blow. But what will replace it, God knows, since there is not a human throb in the heart of these people, and not a want is felt beyond those of the animal nature. It is just the same among the educated classes in Spain, where religion is regarded as an insupportable yoke.

Some time ago, you called the present rapid spread of dishonesty, a consequence of the extinction of religion. I do not know whether the generation which we saw around us in our youth still retained, in general, much religion; they too, for the most part, had grown up in an age when the old respect for religion no longer subsisted. But they had grown up with habits of peaceable endurance, of economy, and moderation in their requirements, and were still imbued with the old maxims of integrity and honour, which must not be ascribed entirely to religious belief, but in great

measure to their condition as citizens. When every one makes claims to a higher standing than he possesses, not from a correct comparison of himself with others and a consciousness of his true worth, but from ambition and unfounded presumption;—when all sense of duty is extinguished, and all family feeling vanishes;—when men are no longer intent upon laying a foundation for their children's future fortunes, but want to live luxuriously in show and splendour, the course of things must be what it is; and the unhappy generation who have been neglected by their parents, and grown up under the deadening influence of constant dissipation and amusement, sink into crime and barbarism. You can scarcely see a sadder sight than a great part of the youths in this city; they are, without exception, warm (so-called) friends of freedom; for freedom means with them to know nothing and to learn nothing, and yet to be puffed up with conceit and to do whatever their hearts lust after. Among the elder men, there is a poor sort of learning; still it is a sort, and gained by real work, though of a stupid kind. The younger men are much duller still. Old truths have become something quite foreign, and of new truths there is not even a germ, so that nothing but crude force can take effect—this alone has any truth to them.

The people can no longer afford to pay the taxes, and if an army make a revolution, unopposed by the people because they find their state unbearable, the first thing will be, that the soldiers will insist on an increase of their pay, as has taken place in Spain and Naples. The end may be, that the troops divide the land among themselves in districts, and give rise to a new feudalism.

I have brought my negotiation to a conclusion, with the exception of a few unimportant points on which a decision has to come from Berlin, and I may say a brilliant conclusion. Bernstorff* recognises this warmly.

With regard to myself, I have no plans at all at present, and leave every thing to Providence. On Marcus' account I should now prefer staying here for another twelvemonth. . . . . .

* The Minister of Foreign Affairs.

CCLXVIII.

ROME, *28th October*, 1820.

The month is drawing to a close without any calamity having overtaken us; and that is more than I, or probably you, had expected. Among the Roman populace itself, the fear of foreign troops has long since quenched all disposition to rash attempts; and, in Naples, the power of the government, who expect nothing but great calamities from a war, is just now sufficient to restrain the madmen who expected all the advantages of plunder from an irruption into the neighbouring country, without great peril, because they could run out again in time. Meanwhile the decisive event is approaching, and can hardly be delayed so long as a fortnight; and for this interval we must pray God for his merciful protection.

The annulling of the capitulation of Palermo, will have given your quick sense of justice a standard by which to judge of these revolutionists. The Sicilians demanded nothing more than their established right of a separate government—like Holstein from Denmark; and the decree that every town, great or small, should have an equal vote, was the most decisive refutation of the charge, that Palermo wanted the sovereignty of the island for herself. Will this perfidious cancelling of the articles of capitulation be also called in Germany a brave and splendid deed, as so many of a similar kind in the French Revolution have been? The interior of Sicily is still in full revolt, in which moreover the whole population takes part; while in Naples it is a mere fragment of the nation that takes any interest in the new *régime*, from which people neither expect a lightening of their burdens, nor the removal of any real grievance.

Stein is to arrive here in December—a meeting which I never expected. I have already received several letters from him written in a mild and friendly tone. My only fear is, that the disorder in his eyes will have made him peevish; else, what would I not give, to see any one here with whom I could converse on the subjects that refresh my heart!

. . . . Have any little pieces and fragments, written in his glorious youthful period, come to light in the new edition of Goethe? Any fragments of the Wandering Jew, or his Mahomet? Or the deified Demon of the Woods?

CCLXIX.

ROME, 11*th November*, 1820.

The post has brought me no letter from you, and now, all letters are opened.

You will perhaps have seen from the newspapers, that the Neapolitan government has given notice to the Roman, that their troops will advance as soon as the Austrians do so. No fault can reasonably be found with this. But thus the critical moment for us is at hand. Remain, the ambassadors cannot, if the Pope goes away, who, on his part, must not wait the arrival of revolutionary troops, and run the risk of being carried off. How desperate the chances of escape are, I have already told you. Our property must, in any case, be left at stake. The insubordination and want of discipline that already exists among the Neapolitan troops, is unparalleled. By way of doing all that is possible, I have taken a trustworthy Piedmontese into my service, who must look after my things as far as he can.

The Neapolitan parliament are acting in the most senseless manner; their financial measures are wretched. Two motions alone display intelligence and insight, both made by Sicilians;—one is for the repeal of the dues on consumption which appertain to the communes on feudal estates; the other, for the transfer of conventual estates to the parishes, and their division into small, hereditary farms. Both motions violate strict justice, but they would produce a salutary effect. That is not the case with such as spring from a wild revolutionary spirit. For instance, in Spain, two-thirds of the landed property are being brought into the market almost at one moment, because all the ecclesiastical estates, valued at 5000 milliards of francs, are to be sold, and the half of all entailed estates is made saleable

from the present time. By this measure, the value of all other estates is annihilated, as has been the case for some years past in Sicily, where, before the revolution broke out, estates to the value of 20,000,000 piastres were offered for sale, and not a single purchaser could be found. The State is about to sell the Church property by auction; and has declared that it will not pay interest upon its bonds, nor recognise them in any other way than by receiving them in payment at these sales. These bonds are, for the most part, the old paper currency, bearing interest, which came into the hands of the stockjobbers long ago, some of it at from 5 to 6 per cent. Large sums are in the hands of foreign stockjobbers, and such will now become purchasers, or let others buy for them. What a class of large landed proprietors will be thus created! As a sacrifice to the idol of uniformity, a general law respecting the corn trade has been made, of which the consequence is, that in Gallicia, which does not produce half the corn it consumes, prices have already doubled, because the entrance of foreign grain is prohibited till the average price of the whole country has reached a certain height; but now, as high roads and conveyances are wanting, and as the corn from the interior must be brought four hundred miles on mules before it reaches the coast, a famine must prevail in the northern provinces, till the prices there make that average when reckoned together with the extremely low prices in New Castile. And is such a government and legislation praiseworthy, and the harbinger of prosperity and freedom? But where revolutionists have the upper hand, such blundering and pernicious measures will never be absent. They must occur, because this party neither possess a general knowledge of the capabilities of a country, nor understand governing, and the inevitable consequences of this are, measures that defeat their own end, and laws that bring calamity in their train. Smuggling and highway robbery are now carried on to an unexampled extent in Spain; this is acknowledged even by the liberal journals of Madrid. The worst enemies of the liberals could not say worse of them than they say of each

other—that is, those who want places say of those who have them. All are asking for rewards, places, pensions. The year can scarcely end without a crisis.

In Naples, a week ago, all the troops were ordered out during two whole nights, cannons planted, &c. To prevent a counter revolution? Nothing of the kind—the police had had a desperate smuggler arrested. But as the fellow was master of a lodge of the Vendita, the Carbonari united to release him by force from the prison, and assassinate the ministers.

Whether the new elective law in France will be sufficient to prevent shameless anarchy from obtaining a legitimate organ in the State, I do not know; experience alone can decide this point; but that without an alteration of the mischievous one that preceded it, a revolution would infallibly have occurred at the New Year, I was quite convinced, when it was still doubtful whether the new ministry would decide upon bringing in such a measure.

I have now seriously set about the continuation of my History; far more to distract my mind from its gloomy apprehensions respecting the state of public affairs, than in the hope of satisfying myself with what I write. I have already told you of the difficulties under which I labour with regard to it. I have likewise taken up the political writings of Plato again. No doubt I have often confessed to you already that I find little congeniality with him, and that the mixture of profundity and sophistry, of elevated thought and aimless oddity, in this tedious labyrinth torments me; and that the consolation that there exists an inner doctrine of which we see only the outward husk, does not satisfy me. It is, to say the least, a capricious whim to give us, not that doctrine, but a form at which we have a right to cavil. Meanwhile, I am seeking to divine this hidden meaning; and I have an episode in my mind in which I shall make use of it, either before or after the first Punic war, in order to exhibit the manners, the religion, and the jurisprudence of the earliest times of Rome. I shall afterwards give the judgment which Plato and Aristotle,

or their disciples, would, according to their own principles, have pronounced on Rome as it then was, if they had known it.

I have been induced to write down my ideas respecting a more effectual regulation of the universities. Essential improvements in them may be easily indicated. . . . .

CCLXX.

ROME, 16*th December*, 1820.

. . . You will have seen by the papers that the sovereigns have invited the King of Naples to a conference at Laybach. What ensued thereupon at Naples is briefly as follows. The ministers, with the exception of two Carbonari, Ricciardi and de Thomasis, were convinced of the mischievous effects of the revolution. This was above all the case with Count Zurlo, a very eminent man; he therefore induced the King and the majority of the ministers to issue a proclamation, whereby the King declared that he would grant a modified constitution, guaranteeing everything that could be reasonably desired. He expected support; he has found himself mistaken. All have shown themselves cowards; and his colleagues have been impeached by the jacobinical ministers. Count Zurlo is charged with high treason, and is probably ruined. The King has left Naples, and war is inevitable.

Amidst these alarming prospects, this winter has been to me the least quiet that I have passed here. Prince Henry of Prussia, and the Princes of Denmark and Bavaria are here. All this gives occasion to parties and invitations from which I cannot excuse myself; and the dinners always cost me the time from four to nine o'clock. M. Von Stein arrived here also last week. . . . .

1821.

The Austrians entered Rome, on their march to put down the Neapolitan constitution, in February, 1821. The doubts that were felt respecting their success were soon dispelled, by the unexampled cowardice of the Neapolitans, who fled at the first attack.

In the same month, Hardenberg, who was attending the conference at Laybach, unexpectedly came to Rome, and, during his short stay, the negotiations with the Papal government were brought to a satisfactory issue. The terms of the treaty were already settled before his arrival; nothing was wanting but its ratification. Niebuhr readily gave up the credit in the eyes of the world of having accomplished this transaction, for the sake of forwarding the business itself, and proposed, of his own accord, that Hardenberg should undertake the conclusion of the treaty.

It was stated in many public journals, that Niebuhr had spent four years in fruitless negotiations; while Hardenberg found means to conclude a treaty in a few days. But whoever wrote or believed this can hardly have been acquainted with the nature of the negotiations, which included the entire regulation of the relations between the State and the Church of Rome, or they would surely not have supposed that subjects of such magnitude, and on which so many conflicting opinions and interests had to be consulted, could be settled in the course of a few days. Neither was it

generally known that Niebuhr had waited nearly four years for his instructions, and it was forgotten that the negotiations were carried on at a time of extraordinary difficulty. It is rather to be wondered that they should have been accomplished at all at such a time, and Niebuhr himself always ascribed it to the personal friendship of the Pope and Cardinal Gonsalvi. He says, in one of his letters, "I have purchased this termination of the business with the sacrifice of personal considerations, and resigned the appearance of having had the honour to accomplish it. The minister of ecclesiastical affairs, however, knows and acknowledges that it is no slight matter to have achieved within eight months, what other ambassadors have been working at in vain for four years. And at what a moment were our negotiations carried on!"

Niebuhr took an active part in the Topographical Description of Rome, undertaken by Bunsen and Brandis, in conjunction with Cotta. The work was executed by Platner, Bunsen, and some others. Niebuhr sketched the plan of the work, and promised a chapter, giving a general account of the topography of ancient Rome; but in the progress of the work, his assistance was claimed to a greater extent than he had foreseen, especially in all that related to antiquities.

Letters written in 1821.

CCLXXI.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 10*th February*, 1821.

I have only a few moments to write, but I must use them to tell you that, up to this time, no misfortune has befallen us, though the tidings that the Austrians had crossed the Po, arrived here so early as Tuesday, and must have reached Naples by Wednesday morning. According to this account, they might have been across the frontiers by this time. We cannot infer anything as to our safety, from the fact that nothing has yet taken place; but if another week pass over quietly, we are saved.

We are not decided whether to fly to Civita Vecchia, if the Pope goes thither, or to stay here for the sake of our children and property.

If regular troops come, I think we shall stay, but if mere rabble, we must certainly endeavour to escape. We hear that three French ships are coming to Civita Vecchia, on board which we shall be able to embark.

The Austrians cannot be before our gates, at the earliest sooner than the 22nd instant. How we long now for the days to pass over! And thus life speeds away!

I gave Stein a beautiful entertainment yesterday, in which the singers of the Pope's chapel performed ancient music.

I have been much cheered by receiving a letter from old Peyron, at Turin, which he means to publish himself, and in which he not only quite takes my part, but attests that he did not discover the point in question till September, &c.*

* Referring to the dispute with Mai.

CCLXXII.

ROME, 17*th March*, 1821.

It must be three weeks since I last wrote to you. Even then, our immediate apprehensions and fears had been removed; only it hardly seemed possible that the war in Naples should not, at least to some extent, be carried on with the savage fury of a war of opinion; and as the means of attack would in that case be insufficient, we could not feel quite easy respecting our position. Never have more brilliant speeches been made than at Naples; the foreigners, especially the young men who had listened to the orations, were quite carried away, and saw in these Polichinellos the heroes of antiquity risen again. I, and all others who knew the Italians, made, indeed, great deductions, and thought very lightly of the moral worth of those who delivered these splendid orations; but still we fancied it possible that the sectarian organisation in particular might have enkindled a fanaticism, which the extraordinarily ill-judged proceedings on the other side could not fail greatly to promote. That the whole had been such a mere miserable piece of lies and mouthing, no one ever dreamed. Even the official reports do not place the matter in so strong a light as truth deserves. In the engagement of Rieti, each side may have lost, perhaps, from fifty to seventy men. As the Austrians were very weak, they were not even able to pursue the enemy; and after this affair the whole army of General Pepe dispersed so completely, that only a part of two regiments which had not been in the engagement, but stood at some distance, threw themselves into Pescara; Pepe himself arrived at Castel Saegro on the 11th, without a single soldier. Between Rieti and Aquila there are three formidable passes, Borghetto, Antrodoco, and Madonna di Grotta, where a handful of men could arrest an army. These were left so completely undefended, that the Austrians had only one man wounded, and their opponents not more. The Neapolitans help themselves with their Italian untruthfulness, and are not ashamed nor

afraid to say in their journals, that Antrodoco was taken by superior numbers, after a most heroic resistance. To-morrow, or at furthest the day after, the other army on the Garigliano will be attacked. It is already much weakened by desertion, at least, compared to what it ought to be to resist the attacking army, and all accounts agree in stating that the soldiers will not fight, and that the militia are only waiting for an opportunity to disband and run home. The corps, of which we may assume that they consist of Carbonari, those, for instance, under Avellino and Salerno, show themselves just as cowardly, and desert just as much as the rest; indeed, they were the first to set the example. Those with the high-sounding names—the Sacred Squadron, the modern Fabii, the three hundred Bruttii, who had entreated the privilege of occupying the posts of greatest danger, have never made their appearance at all, but have completely dispersed themselves.

One trait more. The robbers, who a short time since carried off the boys belonging to the Seminarium at Terracina, and murdered two of them in cold blood, after having received three thousand piastres for their ransom, have been pardoned, and formed into a corps; their chief had made it an indispensable condition that the regimental band should conduct him from Fondi, and this has been done. Between Aquila and Rieti, the Neapolitan troops have plundered everything in their own country, not only in their flight, but also on the march home.

A very different event from the miserable Neapolitan revolution, which ten thousand men could have put down in September (even now only five battalions have been under fire), is the revolt in Piedmont, which we learnt yesterday, just when we thought that the termination of the first farce had secured our safety for the remainder of our stay here. The Piedmontese are a brave and estimable people, but fearfully passionate, and we cannot conceal from ourselves that this incident may lead to incalculable consequences. The Austrians were only prevented by an accident from opening the campaign a week sooner; had they done so (since the

result would no doubt have been the same), one might wager anything that the conspirators in Piedmont would have relinquished their enterprise. God knows what it will come to now!

When you see the blind political faith of young men, in other respects well meaning and intelligent, you cannot help perceiving that with this generation wisdom itself could not succeed in averting a revolution. But the course along which their blindness impels them is one, at the end of which, as has been truly said by M. Von Stein, the Jews will be the ruling class, the husbandman a clown, and the artisan a bungler; where all ties will be dissolved, and the sword alone will be the ultimate authority; but for poor Germany, it will be the sword of the foreigners, who will divide her.

The time is gradually approaching, when the strangers would forsake Rome and we should have quiet, if revolution and war were not raging around us. Still, I will not despair of being able to return afterwards to quiet and my salutary studies. At all events, the festivities and parties are leaving off, with which we occupied ourselves at a time when every one ought to retire into the most solemn. Stein will probably remain here another month. All his old affection for me has re-awakened, and mine was easily revived, so that we are on a footing of cordial friendship. Old age becomes him well, and I can only think of him with tender sadness; it is most likely the last time that we shall see each other, and I thank God that we have met thus.

The children are well and good. Marcus seemed for a time inclined to be delicate. Perhaps I worked his head too hard: I have relaxed a little in this respect. The difficulties of reading are overcome; and if the love of reading awakens later in him than in me, I shall not consider it any misfortune to him.

Gretchen suffers again from time to time with her eyes, and does so at the present moment. How are all your people? I think of them with anxiety. God protect you!

You will most likely have learnt from the journals that the

Chancellor of State has arrived here, accompanied by officers of his department. I only heard of it two days before his arrival. I have given him a splendid entertainment, which I dare say he would very willingly have dispensed with; but if it had not been done all the world would have censured me. Thus are we obliged to plague each other out of conventionalism and politeness! He will leave again in four or five days. Bartholdy was in Naples, but has been summoned.

I have heard from Sch——, who accompanies Hardenberg, that the clergyman at Sesenheim was his uncle, and had four daughters; the unhappy, but universally beloved, Frederike died a few years ago. Her brother, a respectable clergyman, is also dead. She lived to see the publication of Goethe's life; whether she read it, he does not know.

CCLXXIII.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

ROME, 28*th March*, 1821.

Dearest friend, embrace me; the negotiation is concluded, concluded with success, and now we are proceeding to draw up the bull, which I hope will be issued in a month. May Heaven only guide the thoughts of Monsignor M. by a right lively representation of the more or less costly snuff-box that awaits him, and direct both our pens, so that no outcry may be raised against the bull at the last moment! You will learn everything through Count Bernstorf.

Hardenberg's journey hither has really been a blessing; it cost me nothing more than the sacrifice of allowing him to take the credit of having brought the affair to a settlement. And as he will thereby be bound to its execution and results, I incited Cardinal Gonsalvi to speak to him in my presence, as if it were his work, and to express it in his note.

Now, when the matter has to be carried out, your ministry can do much; and I have assured the Pope that he may rely upon honest intentions.

Only above all make haste with all your proposals

respecting appointments. That the Roman cabinet have accepted so long a delay is a brilliant proof of the confidence which they place in our good-will.

Your letter, my dear friend, belongs to the rewards which Heaven has accorded to my efforts. I thank you a thousand times for it in my own and Gretchen's name. But I always stand in such deep self-abasement before your humility, and your over-estimate of me. What am I?—a decayed wreck. If it were not for the children I should sigh, my God when wilt thou break it up!

However, I rejoice in the success of my undertaking. I began it without any hope of attaining my end. Now we are the first in the field.

How long I shall remain here, as my presence will soon be no longer necessary (I allow to myself that it has been useful, that with the same instructions the business might have foundered), who can tell? For now I can take my leave with a good conscience, if I meet with any new *dégoûts*. I have begged the Chancellor—and I think it will tally with your wishes—to have a large picture painted by the very eminent artist, Philip Veit, as a present to the cathedral of Cologne, on occasion of the restoration of the Archbishopric. I should propose to Veit, as a subject, either the presentation of the relics of the Three Kings to the deputies of Cologne by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, after the taking of Milan, or the Vision of Count William of Jülich.

I cannot give any orders for pictures now, for I give all that I can spare to my poor dear S.* How I should like to see him a bishop!

As soon as the bull has been despatched, I shall hasten to Naples. At present, you can have an Austrian escort for the whole distance, and General Frimont will no doubt, in case of necessity, open everything that would otherwise be inaccessible to me, with his grenadiers.

The issue of events at Naples has exhibited the baseness of these Italians in its proper colours. Their sole moral incentive is vanity, and vanity is not bullet-proof.

* Schmieder.

It would be different in Spain, and yet even there you might demolish everything with thirty thousand men.

We have disgraceful contemporaries. Our poor children! We rejoice heartily as your true friends in all the good news that you tell us of your family, and mourn in sympathy with our dear friends the Göschens.

Accept love yourself from Gretchen, and give our united kind regards to your family and all friends. Excuse haste, and embrace me once more.

Your faithful NIEBUHR.

CCLXXIV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *7th April*, 1821.

It grieved me much not to write to you last week, but it was impossible. Happily, you could not have made yourself anxious about us for some time past. But I should so have liked to have written to you, because I was full of joy at having concluded my important negotiations on ecclesiastical affairs; concluded, not so but that there is much to do in carrying out details, but still so far that we have come to an agreement on all essential points, and only some quite unforeseen circumstance, such as, for instance, the death of the Pope before the completion of the bulls, could interfere with the matter.

Now since we must assume that good may arise from this settlement—and at least it is certain that the prolongation of the present state of things would involve actual evil—it would have been very painful to me if I had not been able to accomplish this business. And how often, and for how many reasons this seemed likely!

It contributes to improve my position as regards the social annoyances which I have to suffer even now from the impertinence of a few fools, that the Emperor of Austria has presented me with the grand cross of the Leopold Order. You know that probably there are not many who care less about these things than myself, and that I know what is

true honour. Would to God that I had never been placed in any position where this is insufficient! But I have been drifted into another sphere, and am compelled to live among people, to whom all that would have secured me due appreciation among the highest class, counts for nothing; who, in fact, rather deem my learning and studies unbecoming my position, and a thing to be pardoned. In this place I have gradually worked my way up to influence and consideration, and have not often occasion to feel the want of it; still indications are now and then given, and were formerly much more frequently perceptible, of contempt for my station and plain name, which will be put an end to by such marks of distinction. Had not Count Blacas,* who is regarded in Germany as the most extreme aristocrat, displayed the most friendly feeling towards me from the very beginning of my residence here, and treated me quite as his equal, my position in these circles as a commoner would have been much more unpleasant even than it has been.

Stein has given me his portrait. It is a drawing, and very like him. He much preferred my house to any other during his stay here. Old age has made him very amiable. May his remaining years be happy! When he bid Marcus good night yesterday evening, he kissed and stroked him; I remember that his own children only used to kiss his hand. Thank God that I shall part from him with this remembrance! To-morrow, I shall accompany him at his request as far as Tivoli.

Marcus is losing his robust appearance; he has no signs of ill health; still it makes me uneasy.

The editor of the "Independente," one of the most violent Neapolitan journals, is now contractor for the Austrian army. Thus do these fellows change their colours when they see any advantage to be gained by it. . . . .

* The French ambassador.

CCLXXV.

ROME, *28th April*, 1821.

Last week I received your letter, in which you speak of the anxiety that the Piedmontese insurrection has caused you on our account. Your care for us has touched me deeply.

The occurrences in Piedmont appear to us of importance, only because we know that they owe their origin to the leaders of the Left in France, and that there was a wish to make the experiment of a revolution in France itself. The plans for such an event had been so completely worked out, that in a letter from Madrid of the 24th of March, which has been delayed on the road and has only just been communicated to me, it is stated that this revolution had been arranged with the knowledge and sympathy of the heads of the Cortes, and in particular of the Count Toreno, and would break out in a few days, if it had not broken out already.

For the rest, I should have expected that the Piedmontese would have shown firmness in the execution of their rash enterprise; but although the conspirators were numerous, considered as such, they formed an infinitely small part of the nation, which did not expect any good from the hands of dissolute and frivolous young officers, nor from any of these ambitious men. Thus these good-for-nothing fellows have brought an inexpressible calamity on their country, in the shape of foreign occupation, and the exchange of a narrow-minded but honest and well-intentioned king, for a prince who will not govern mildly. Who would have thought that we should live to see those revolts of arrogant soldiers, who, after giving away thrones, fled, or practised some new treachery, which characterise the worst periods of ancient history, and were hitherto unknown in recent times?

The Spanish ships which took on board the fugitives from Naples, have landed them at Ischia, probably because

they had no money. In Spain, the minister of finance has detected the greatest dishonesty in his predecessor, and the deficit is estimated at 28,000,000 piastres! And this is the minister of finance on account of whose removal, with his colleagues, the Cortes wished to excite a new revolution, and may perhaps do it yet!

It is true that in most places it is only evil in conflict with evil, but that evil which establishes its empire with the utmost tyranny, and founds its right on false pretensions to moral and intellectual eminence, is far more hateful to me, because far more pernicious, than that which takes its stand, almost stupidly and without thought, on possession, and for the rest, interferes with no one else in his possessions. The quiet of summer is now approaching, and the crowd of foreigners is dispersing. Stein is gone to Naples. . . . .

CCLXXVI.

ALBANO, 11*th May*, 1821.

. . . . I have formed a very interesting acquaintance with Lord Colchester; indeed, it has come to that mutual feeling of attachment which the acquaintanceships formed in later life seldom exceed. With me he threw off his usual silence and reserve. He earnestly wishes that I might come to London as ambassador; but even if this could be brought about, I feel that the whole mode of life involved by such a vocation is injurious to me.

I think I have never told you, that in the beginning of the winter, the celebrated Countess of Albany, Alfieri's friend, born Princess Stolberg, was here; she is intellectual enough to make it worth one's while to become acquainted with her. What has reminded me of it is, that the Pretender, her husband, once fitted up and lived in the house which we are now occupying at Albano. After I had seen her, I made a good many inquiries about her, and certainly learnt much that justifies what we are so often compelled to feel, namely, that eminent and varied talents by no means always coincide

with moral worth. Her husband abandoned himself to drinking, because she drove him to despair by her infatuation for Alfieri; and she did not even remain faithful to Alfieri to the last, although she has erected a magnificent monument to his memory with the ostentation of the widow of a celebrated man. Though very old now, you may still call her beautiful. . . . .

CCLXXVII.

ROME, 11*th August*, 1821.

This time I have long remained in your debt for your last dear letter, and yet it is long since any letter has rejoiced me so much.

The children are my delight, and when one has seen them in danger, one's anxiety lasts long after the danger is over. Marcus has not indeed got rid of his complaint, and the least trifle aggravates it; still he has much improved, and is gaining flesh. Our Amelia has been threatened with an attack of dysentery lately, but the danger has been averted. Amelia, too, clings to us now much more than she did, and is growing a very sweet child; her obstinacy is gradually giving way, and she is learning to obey without ill-humour. We do not teaze her with lessons yet, and it will be a great difficulty with her, too; she is so lively and volatile. Marcus could learn anything if he did not prefer any kind of motion to sitting still. We talk German with him a good deal now, and he understands everything. Lucia runs alone and is very quick. She is very fond of her brother.

Certainly, my attention, too, is fixed upon Greece. I curse Ypsilanti's enterprise, which has sacrificed the lives of thousands in vain, and abandoned many to a still worse fate. God grant that the Emperor Alexander may fulfil his noble idea of taking nothing for himself, but founding an independent State there, against whose existence no one could have the face to raise an opposition. Meanwhile, there is only one form under which the Greeks and the other tribes can have a national existence—that of antiquity and the

middle ages, a sovereign whose powers are undefined, but who allows each tribe and each community to do what they think best with respect to their internal affairs, on condition that they perform fixed services in war, and pay certain imposts. It would be a most important and advantageous revolution for Europe. Millions could settle in the waste lands of the most highly-favoured countries, and the emigration now turned towards America, and lost to Europe, might create a new source of strength to the latter. Who knows how far into the interior Asia might not become European in time.

CCLXXVIII.

ROME, 16*th August*, 1821.

I only write to you to-day to impart my consolation to you. If I can think of anything besides my boy, it is the reports from the Archipelago. We have as yet no certainty that the report of the naval battle before Mitylene is true; but the accounts of it from Corfu are of a character that renders it credible. If so, though these Greek mariners taken singly are nothing better than pirates, and no one who loves his life will embark in a ship of Hydra with any tempting property, I respect them notwithstanding, and begin to expect something from them. The deed must prove the man. It was the Dutch corsairs, accustomed to plunder friend and foe, who, in 1572, took Briel and founded the republic. A Greek republic is a chimera; but a State may very likely spring up there, and my imagination pursues the endless developments of the events which may result from the dissolution of the Turkish empire, and the opening of Asia Minor and Syria to European colonisation. Only I do not see how a nation like the Greeks will allow themselves to be governed. If you attempt to make them European, they will become absolutely worthless. I imagine German colonies in Bithynia, &c.

CCLXXIX.

TO NICOLOVIUS.

ROME, *15th September*, 1821.

I give you my special thanks for the first volume of Hamann's * writings; O that I may not have to receive the rest in this den. You cannot imagine how painfully we lonely and forsaken creatures feel the want of any one with whom we can hold a conversation; how often, of a Sunday evening for instance, we are reminded that we are in Tomi, and sigh, Oh, if we could but have the Göschens, Nicolovius, or Savigny with us for an evening! Hamann's writings make me feel the want of you with tenfold acuteness, though one evening would not be sufficient to say all we should have to say about them. He who looks on everything from an historical point of view, finds himself in a former and remarkable world as he reads them. It is another question,—and one which before I was acquainted with these writings, I had not expected to find myself forced to ask—whether their publication is likely to prove beneficial—I mean with a public such as ours is at the present day. For the moment, a certain coquetting with pietism seems to be in fashion among a considerable number of the younger generation,—not altogether from hypocrisy and vanity, but with very few, from inward and honest feeling. Our age demands glaring colours and shrill sounds, now of one kind, now of another. This fashion will not last long, but the moment is unfavourable for the appearance of anything that gives it authority, because people do not understand such a work. But my anxiety extends beyond the present moment; I fear lest the

* Hamann was a celebrated and profound, but obscure writer on theological and philosophical subjects, of the last century, and an opponent of Kant; he was born, and spent the great part of his life in Königsberg, and was an intimate friend of Herder and Jacobi, on the former of whom, especially, he exercised great influence in early life. The character of his theology is sufficiently apparent from Niebuhr's letters. His detached Essays and Letters have been collected and published by Roth, 1821—1825. He never wrote any comprehensive work. To characterise at once his almost prophetical insight, and the obscurity of his style, he was called the Magus of the North.

generation, who cannot in the least understand Hamann and the times in which he flourished, should take lasting offence at this representation of a rude and shaggy form. I had not read the biography, when I expressed the wish that it might appear as it was; and never dreamed of the publication of a correspondence such as that with Lindner. I confess to you that I would now give much, that any one who was competent—you above all—should have worked up the two, the biography and the letters, into a single life of Hamann, by which means much that must now be misunderstood by nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would have been rendered intelligible, and much that is painful would have been avoided. Few will know how Hamann,—evidently from his very childhood,—grew up and took root in the poetical pietism then prevailing at Königsberg; and how in the crisis that took place in him in London, *such* a religion might rise even to fanaticism and fierceness, without the slightest admixture of affectation, and should remain the permanent key-note of his soul. Does it displease you, my friend, that I say *even to fierceness?* I confess to you that this is my feeling with regard to his connexion with the Behrens family, and for my justification let me tell you, that Gretchen's feelings recoil from it no less than my own. This renunciation of all gratitude, these despotic pretensions, this excessive petulance, appear to us merely other phases of the demoniacal nature which appears in such a fearful shape in G., indeed, still more frightful, because the conscience of the man who has abandoned himself to these impulses, approves his conduct and confirms him in it. I turn now to another consideration. If all extraordinary persons were exhibited to the very recesses of their soul, by the publication of their correspondence, they would be as it were on a footing of equality, and one might let one after another appear, without lowering any relatively. As it is, this is not the case; indeed, I say God be thanked that it is not! It is not well that the world should see into the inmost soul of every man, and both the world and history would be unendurable if it could. There are garments of the soul which you should

no more strip off than those of the body; and a biography that veils nothing is neither right nor wholesome.

In one respect, at least, this history when understood clearly, and in its details, is useful;—that it teaches us how even the greatest and most exalted spirits of our human race are ignorant how accidentally their eye has assumed the form through which they see, while from the extreme intensity of their consciousness, they authoritatively demand that every one shall see as they do. He who has not recognised this quite distinctly and in many instances, may be subjugated by the presence of a mighty intellect, that casts the most intense passion into a given form; and the immediate contemplation of the daily intellectual life of a powerful man, has all the injurious effect upon an immature mind, of novel-reading upon a weak girl. The most captivating novels are those which are wholly or mostly written in the form of letters. It is these which stir the emotions, and historical composition which deserves the name, speaks in discourses; it is not the actions, but the speeches and the thought which touch our hearts. If I had the energy which I have not, I would, if only by way of proof, relate what might inflame the imagination in the most dangerous way, so that it should not move you; and then again, sway the imagination of my readers so that they should espouse the party of Marius or Sulla; so that they should not scruple at the bloodshed, but have the guilt of all that flowed, upon their consciences. . . . .

CCLXXX.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *29th September*, 1821.

Your last letter affected me deeply in more than one way. When we can no longer attain, or no longer endure a life of exciting emotion and action, the only thing left us to wish for is peace and quiet. This applies to me personally, as well as to public life at the present day.

I meant to write to you a short time ago about Hamann's works, and the impression they made upon me. Hitherto

our feelings have harmonised, or if not at first, have, with very rare exceptions, been brought into harmony when we have explained ourselves. I was anxious to know whether our inward agreement would be interrupted on this remarkable occasion. I hope not. You will doubtless have read his writings. Now, I ask you, do you sympathise with them? Are you glad to possess them?

Much about Hamann has been made clearer to me. I understand now the origin of the first, and perhaps the most remarkable of his writings, of which I before knew nothing. But was it not enough for me to perceive that the original mould of his mind was that of a giant, who had survived a perished race, and lived on in an utterly different age of the world? It was indeed necessary to know something of that earlier race, and to understand how it lived in the pietism, which, in Königsberg, more than anywhere else, had acquired a strong and living power over men; the traces and traditions of which we see in Hippel's writings, and amidst whose influences Hamann too grew up.

But what do we gain by the publishing of his life and letters? Or rather, how much do we not lose by the dispersion of the mist that concealed the personality of this mysterious man? We see a young man, whose aspirations and struggles the present generation will not be able to understand nor even to divine, giving a loose to his inclinations, neglecting in the most careless and unconscientious manner his obligations towards his unselfish and loving friends, swimming with the stream of his passions, and when at last, the difficulties of his desperate position recall his earlier pietistic feelings, yet not led back by them in the least to his duties towards his fellow-creatures. We see him, on his return, despising the same friends in his spiritual pride, accepting their benefits while hating and condemning them, yet still reserving the privilege of returning to them, whenever necessity may drive him to such a course. Apart from all the unhappy influences which this book may and will exercise over perverted minds, allowing that such temporary effects are not to be taken into account (which I am less willing to concede the older I

become, and the longer and more attentively I regard the varied forms which perverted views assume,) how does he appear to us? As a man possessed by a demon, who believes himself called to rule despotically. From his earliest childhood, he had been accustomed to this pietistic interpretation of the Bible, to look on it as a handbook for every event of life; in moments when his whole nature had been overwhelmed by distress, difficulty, and remorse, it had seized hold of his mind with a force which influenced his whole life; but this supposed sanctification had no effect on his actions. The correctness of these views of the Scriptures is not affected in the slightest degree practically or historically by this Life. God grant that no one may assert that it is! His mind was beyond all question one of the deepest and most powerful that Germany ever produced, and his sayings, clothed in the language which had become a second nature to him, assumed the colouring and mystery of oracles. The unfettered mind, which is neither frightened nor enslaved by formulas, extracts the living power from these oracular sayings, without regard to their form, which it is absolutely impossible for any man fully to accept, unless he has a peculiar cast of thought, and has been brought up in a peculiar atmosphere. Now, however, it is made clear to us, that Hamann himself regarded this form as the true essence, and thus we have become vitally estranged from him. No one perhaps can fully comprehend how fearful this pietism is, who has not often been forced to hear that all human virtues are damnable, nay, are even dangerous, and that the most sinful human being who has true faith in Christ's redemption, stands infinitely nearer to the Saviour, than the man who is, according to human ideas, the noblest and most virtuous, but without that self-loathing.

I maintain that, as a general rule, the letters which lay bare the inmost being of an extraordinary, but not saint-like, man, should never be published. For his sake they ought not to be given to the world, because it is not good nor just to exhibit one isolated soul naked, while the immense majority are not so; nor for the sake of others,

because what is concealed by the relations of life ought not to be laid bare. Why was not his life written as it might have been told?

The most remarkable part of the book to me is that passage from St. Augustine, which I must either have passed over, or not yet comprehended, when I read the Confessions. I would recommend it to the consideration of those who would restore the Church by means of outward formulas. Let them reflect why it was, that the most profound among all the Fathers wished so to express himself on matters of doctrine, that every man might find his own belief, if it were not an utterly false one, in his words.

I have now begun to teach Marcus Latin by conversation, and he learns very well. . . . .

CCLXXXI.

ROME, 29*th December*, 1821.

For the sixth time we are ending our year at Rome. Meanwhile time exercises his power, and without ceasing to be, and to feel ourselves strangers in this place, we are also becoming estranged from our own country. Thus life passes away, and one feels that it passes miserably; and yet I cannot agree with the pious persons who call life a miserable thing in itself. I know, on the contrary, that it becomes miserable only through our own follies, faults, and weaknesses; and that a life wrought into beauty and harmony is a blessing possible not merely in dreams. . . . . During this winter my health has not been worth much, though I could not exactly call myself ill. I want the refreshment of sympathy without which I always feel exhausted, and cannot be really healthy, and which in itself is a sufficient recompense to me for some degree of physical indisposition. . . . . It gives me very great pleasure that you agree with me as to the publication of Hamann's letters. It struck me, too, how deeply-rooted the acquaintanceships of his youth must have been. At that time there was nothing in Germany but oak trees and creepers; now there are only half-grown trees, blown awry by the winds.

1822.

In February, 1822, Niebuhr's wife bore him a third daughter. Since the chief object of his mission was now attained, and the health of his wife rather grew worse than better, he determined to request his recall. The Minister of his department advised him; however, in the first instance, only to ask for a year's furlough, and thus to leave the way open for his return, if he should think it desirable at the end of that time. And certainly, as far as he was personally concerned, he might probably have remained many years longer in Rome, as is shown by his letters of the preceding year. He had become acclimatised, and accustomed to the mode of life in Rome, and now looked forward to a time of greater repose, in which he might devote himself with zeal to his studies. For, however far his course of life might seem to carry him from his own peculiar pursuits, he always retained his old partiality for them, and anticipated some future time when he might return to them. His high views of their true principles and method may be seen from a letter, inserted at the close of the extracts belonging to this year, and entitled—"A Letter to a young man who wished to devote himself to Philology." It was written in the course of this summer, and addressed to a young friend of his, whom he believed to be pursuing an erroneous path.

In August, 1822, Niebuhr had to engage in a very

unpleasant contest on behalf of the Protestants living in Rome. A blindly fanatical, priestly party, was bent on the demolition of the Protestant burial-ground. Niebuhr felt himself bound to resist this outrage to the feelings of his fellow-worshippers with all his might, and to assist his friend Lord Colchester, who shared his efforts in the cause. He spent part of this summer in Albano, and made a little excursion besides to Tivoli, with Chevalier Bunsen and M. Lieber, whom, on his return from Greece, he had engaged as tutor to his son.

In November, the King of Prussia paid a short visit to Rome, with a small retinue. Niebuhr and Baron Alexander von Humboldt accompanied him to the most celebrated spots in the city and its neighbourhood. Several of Niebuhr's old friends were in the King's suite, so that he had the satisfaction of renewing his intercourse with them for a short interval.

He also derived much enjoyment this winter from the society of Messrs. Pertz and Bluhme, who had been sent to Rome to prosecute researches into ancient MSS., and were able to enter into the literary subjects which engaged Niebuhr's attention.

Meanwhile, Niebuhr sent in a request, agreeably to the advice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that he might either be recalled, or receive leave of absence in the following spring. The latter was granted him, and he thankfully accepted it, although he was persuaded that his wife's state of health, as well as his views with regard to their son, would prevent him from ever returning to Rome. The child's attachment to the place was so great, as to make his father fear that if he

remained longer there, he would never feel at home in Germany. This consideration, joined to the difficulty of educating him in Rome in the manner he wished and intended, had a great influence upon Niebuhr's decision not to return thither. Indeed, after he became a father, Niebuhr considered the training of his children, especially of his son, as the most imperative duty of his life, to which all other considerations, except that of very evident and important service to his country, ought to be subordinated. In ordinary times, he placed private duties above public ones. No one, who has read his life thus far, will suspect him of undervaluing the latter.

Before leaving Italy Niebuhr wished to see Naples, and to take leave of his friend de Serre, who was now ambassador at that court. As the time of his departure drew near, Niebuhr felt how much it cost him to forsake Rome. There was, indeed, much in his circumstances that did not harmonise with his peculiar tastes; but, on the other hand, he felt that he was giving up an independent, and in many respects advantageous, position, and entering on a period of uncertainty.

Thus, but for the sake of his family, he would not have quitted Rome for ever. His friends and children exclaim with sorrow, "Oh that he had remained, and then perhaps he would yet be spared to us!"

Letters written in 1822.

CCLXXXII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 19*th January*, 1822.

. . . . We have daily proofs of Marcus's noble nature; still I am well aware that this affords us no guarantee unless it be guided with the most watchful care. I trust he will never turn out a conceited, shallow fool, nor a man who is himself contented with superficiality, and assumes an appearance to throw dust in the eyes of others. I could never be consoled, if I were one day to see him go out into the world as an arrogant young collegian, or an empty blockhead and shallow prater, or as a vain fool seeking to make himself of importance, not by real ability, but by means of unwarranted pretensions or affectation, which is the case with so many of our young people now-a-days. Either they are puffed up with conceit, and want to make reforms, and think themselves qualified to pronounce on all subjects, and look down on people the latchet of whose shoe they are not worthy to unloose; or if they do not belong to this party, they know nothing, learn nothing, cannot set about anything with earnestness and capability, and assume the show of refinement,—of course only on the outside,—and think that if they can but shine in their own opinion, and in the empty assemblies of fashionable life, they will have gained all they need, and are perfectly prepared to take a standing in the world. I succeed with teaching as well as I could have ventured to hope. He already knows no inconsiderable number of Latin words, and he understands grammar so well that I can now set him to learn parts of the conjugations without their teasing him like dead matter; he divines many of the forms, from his own feeling. I am reading with him selected chapters from Hygin's Mythologicum—a book which, perhaps, it is not easy to use for this purpose, and which yet is more

suited to it than any other, from the absence of formal periods, and the interest of the narrative. For German, I write fragments of the Greek mythology for him. I began with the history of the Argonauts; I have now got to the history of Hercules. I give everything in a very free and picturesque style, so that it is as exciting as poetry to him; and, in fact, he reads it with such delight that we are often interrupted by his cries of joy. The child is quite devoted to me; but this educating costs me a great deal of time. However, I have had my share of life, and I shall consider it as a reward for my labours if this young life be as fully and richly developed as lies within my power.

Unexpected thoughts often escape him. Two days ago he was sitting beside me, and began—"Father, the ancients believed in the old gods; but still they believed also in the true God. The old gods were just like men." . . . .

CCLXXXIII.

ROME, *6th April*, 1822.

Again your longed-for letter has failed to reach me. . . . .

Marcus is reading Diodati's beautiful (Protestant) Bible (the Gospels), and he reads it with lively interest. He draws very carefully.

I spoke to you, a little while ago, of the ill-fated men who are returning in shoals from Greece. Till now, my intercourse with them has been almost confined to one individual, who is a very well-intentioned youth, a Rhinelander, who had served in the Landwehr. He and a few Saxons curse the pamphlets, and all the rest of the rhodomontade, which had deluded them into the idea, that a Greek army of 30,000 men was in the field, and only required to be officered, &c. They found no army, and instead of receiving any pay, were obliged to sell everything they had for the necessaries of life. Their presence was not at all desired, and they might thank God if they could but find means to get back again. My acquaintances confess that I told them all this beforehand; thus, for instance, that, by Greek soldiers, they must

only understand associated bands of Klephthi (robbers), who would be joined in certain cases by the peasantry;—by their commanders, bandit chieftains, who would be equally avaricious and bloodthirsty, to whom it was absurd to offer their services, except for the artillery; who absolutely could not afford to pay a single man, and who would distrust everybody. Nevertheless, I wish them, from my heart, every blessing and success. One must be a fool to expect virtuous heroism from them, and a cold politician of the present day to surrender them to extermination.

CCLXXXIV.

TO SAVIGNY.

ROME, 23*rd May*, 1822.

Your work,* my friend, was a real refreshment to me; somewhat such as it would be to see you here, where I have none of the interchange of thought, to which I had been so habituated, and on which I am so dependent. In this respect, believe me, you could not have a duller life in the most stupid little country town, than I lead here, leaving Bunsen out of the question.

That I read your book immediately, from beginning to end, and some parts of it repeatedly, it is needless to say; and yet I must say it; and likewise, that it answers my expectations, and that I honour you all the more for it, because I could not write anything like it myself. I cannot honour any man for writing what I could have written myself—only appreciate him, and allow that he is not less than I am. Understand me, this is no pride; so far from it, it is my honest feeling that a man is little enough if he can do no more than I, since I feel how infinitely more I could do if I had acquired more correct notions of facts when I possessed my full powers, and if I had not wasted my opportunities so dreadfully. You have opened quite a

* Savigny's "History of Jurisprudence during the Middle Ages,"—his principal work.

new world to me, and I believe to all your readers, by your account of academical institutions in the Middle Ages; for this very reason I have nothing to say to you on that subject, but turn to other topics which are not so foreign to me.* . . . .

It is possible that I may have written something like this to you years ago, but I think scarcely in so distinct a form. The union was effected everywhere in Italy in an extremely rough and unskilful manner; with much more dexterity in many of the German Imperial towns, where the relations [between the orders] were precisely the same; and, besides, the German nobles were much more honourable and obedient to the laws than the Italian ones, who allowed themselves the most criminal license, while the burgher class were also a worthless set. For Italy has been an infernal pool, from the Middle Ages to the present time, as it was from the Empire to the Middle Ages. It is a strange thing how any one can get up any enthusiasm for the Italian republics. Read Varchi's History (which, by the way, is one of the most picturesque, consequently most perfect, in existence; so that the reader, particularly if he have visited Florence, forgets everything around him, and can live the whole day through amongst those of whom he is reading), and you will find it conceivable how Fr. Guicciardini should have made those Machiavellian projects to render the revival of the republic impossible, which make our hair stand on end. It is nevertheless true that it was Satan and Beelzebub striving together; that this does not make the cause of the Medici a good one, and shall not prevent us from honouring Francisco Ferrucci.

Let me always write down these digressions as if we were talking together, and remember my fondness for entering into the views of all parties, and being guided by none, not even in history.

In passing, I must also tell you, or rather repeat to you,

* The portion here omitted treats of the constitution of the towns in Germany and Italy in the Middle Ages, and the gradual fusion and organisation of the various elements of which their population was composed.

that I entirely defend Machiavelli's "Principe," taken in its full and literal acceptation, even as he certainly wrote it in the bitterest earnest. How much is there, which we may not say aloud, for fear of being stoned by the stupid good people! There are times in which every individual must be sacred to us; others, in which we can and ought only to treat men in masses; all depends upon a true understanding of the times. A hundred years sooner, Cæsar would have been a criminal; when he lived he was forced to govern. To talk of freedom in Italy, in our days, is what none but a fool or a villain could do; and I know nothing more miserable than Alfieri's affected panegyric of Trajan. Tacitus lived like a stranger in his century, but, with all the aspirations of his heart, it could never occur to him to wish for anything beyond a tolerable present. I see that it is as usual with me, when I let my pen take its own course in writing to you. For how many days could we talk without coming to an end of what we had to say!* . . . .

Of the old Roman constitution, it is plain that Cicero had only the most confused conceptions; he never troubles himself in the least to trace its development.

It is only a piece of good luck, that no passages occur which the blockheads could seize as express evidence in favour of the old trivial opinions, in order to refute me with authority. Hence the interest of the book is confined to its other aspects. In the first place, the style and language are exquisitely beautiful; and then, too, the fundamental political idea is remarkable. I cannot believe that Cicero wrote without any immediate reference to his own times—that he was merely stringing phrases together without any practical application. If I am right, we see that what he wished for, as the only safeguard for freedom in that unhappy age, was the sovereignty of one individual for life, with a division of the powers as they had existed in the old constitution (or as he had conceived them to exist there); not the elevation of a family to an hereditary kingship.

* Here followed an account of the books of Cicero's "De Republica," discovered by Mai.

The factious power of the so-called *optimates*, between whom and the demagogues men had then but a mournful choice, he estimates at its true value, in a very remarkable passage. I believe most decidedly that the work had an elevated practical significance, which is obscure only because the lost books were the most important part of the work. Unfortunately the idea was impracticable, because Pompey and Cæsar were both living at once, and it was needful that Destiny should be fulfilled, as it always must be fulfilled, when decay has proceeded so far. The yearly elections were, at that period, a constant renewal of misery, and had no longer any result but that of gratifying the ambition of many; their original import was lost, and could not be restored. What is your opinion about it, my friend? I should like, if I had opportunity, to translate these fragments, to fill up the chasms with supplements in the translation (to do it in Latin would be an impertinence), and to append notes to it.

After I have said so much to you upon learned matters, perhaps I may turn to our personal concerns. With regard to these, the constant indisposition and increasing weakness of my wife is the darkest side of the picture. The children leave us nothing to wish for. They have just got over the hooping cough; my wife had paid her debt to it in her childhood, but I was also attacked by it, and have not yet recovered my strength. That under these circumstances, I have not been able to carry on any continuous study, you will readily imagine. I am so weak that I can bear very little exertion. The climate too makes one indolent.

We have lived much alone for some time past. In Cornelius we lost a friend whose society we enjoyed and valued.

Your friend is certain of a cordial reception. But we cannot supply what travellers often desire. We give no dinners, and there are no *soirées* at our house, where they can find society assembled. Hence travellers find great fault with me, and it is seldom that any come to me who enjoy me as I am. But then it is the right people who do so; for

instance, Lord Colchester and de Serre. Between the last and myself a downright passion has sprung up.* '

CCLXXXV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, *7th June*, 1822.

. . . . De Serre has been here,† and we have been very intimate with each other, and lament that we cannot live together. I could form a friendship with him such as I have not formed for many years. In mind and heart he is entirely what I had pictured to myself; he is one of the rarest and noblest human beings that I have ever met with. We have expressed our sentiments to each other with perfect openness respecting all that deeply occupies the intellect of man; about the past and the future, about Germany and France. Nationality is no barrier between us; he is a perfect master of our language, though he prefers talking in French, because I speak it more easily than he does German. He is thoroughly acquainted with our literature; pronounces, for instance, exactly the same verdict as we do upon Goethe's writings at the different periods of his life. While an admirer of his youthful writings, "Wilhelm Meister" and others of a similar stamp are distressing to him. He suits a court about as well as I do, except that having better

* In a later letter, Niebuhr writes as follows about him:—"I conducted de Serre about the Forum here, and our conversation led us from the topography to the history of Rome—a conversation which would have been impossible with any man less resembling the ancient orators, and which could not have been equally delightful, even with him, in any other place. He understood everything, as I placed before him with a vividness with which I was inspired by his sympathy, the progress of the constitution, the manners, and religion through succeeding centuries, and justified the Gracchi, Marius, and Sulla. He asked me if I had sufficient affection for him, to write this down for his use, and this I intend to do without any learned demonstration. It may, at all events, help to supply the place of a continuation of the History. He said, 'You must write, bearing it in mind that I am not learned.' I replied, 'You are neither more nor less learned than Demosthenes, and I love you like him.'"

† He had been one of the French ministers at the Congress of Verona, which opened in October of this year.

spirits, he more easily adapts himself to everything. Our political convictions are essentially quite identical.

A young man has lately arrived here, a M. Lieber, of Berlin, who went to Greece as a volunteer, and has returned, partly that he might not die of starvation, partly because he found the boundless corruption of the Moreans, and, withal, their cowardice, insufferable. His veracity is unquestionable, and the horror which his narrations inspire is not to be described. All this has plunged him into deep melancholy; for he has a very noble heart. He has deeply moved and interested us, and we are trying to cheer his spirits by friendly treatment, and to banish from his thoughts the infernal scenes which he has witnessed. He is one of the youths of the noble period of 1813 (when he served in the army, and was wounded), who lost themselves in visions, the elements of which they drew from their own hearts; and this terrible contrast between his experience and all that he had imagined,—all that impelled him into distant lands, has broken his heart. He is now here in a state of destitution; I shall at all events give him aid; but I mean to propose to him in the first instance to come to us, and assist me in instructing Marcus and in my literary labours. He was arrested during the unhappy investigations of 1819, but dismissed as innocent.

CCLXXXVI.

ROME, 22*nd June*, 1822.

I can only write to you briefly to-day. I returned from Tivoli yesterday, very much fatigued, and have many letters to send off.

For this year past, I had not spent a single day beyond the walls of Rome, and felt the need of breathing a little fresh air. . . . . I have been obliged, however, to leave Cornelia and the rest of the children behind. Marcus, Bunsen, and Lieber accompanied me.

Lieber has now taken up his abode with us. I can entrust Marcus to his care with confidence, and the child too is

already fond of him. I hope to rescue the young man from utter dejection, and to convince him that just as his experience in Greece taught him the visionary nature of his wishes and expectations, so he would have made the same discovery in any other nation where the masses are liberated from all forms; but that the Noble and Beautiful are not a dream, and will never be wholly wanting in the world, however terrible may be its condition. A young man of warm feelings must be convinced of this truth, before you can attempt to prove to him that the evil which prevails so widely, could not be found among the rulers unless it existed in the multitude; that change of form can bring no deliverance unless the individual can be first improved.

I am called away, as a very estimable young man, Dr. Pertz, has come to take leave of me, and I cannot let him depart without a blessing.

There is a small circle of men with whom I could spend my life, and wish that we could come to know each other. And if ever a human being existed so persuaded of the correctness and truth of his view of the world that he could stake his life upon it, I am that man. I know that I see truly as I know that I exist.

Amelia has begun to write and to sew. She can read most things without spelling.

CCLXXXVII.

TO THE COUNT DE SERRE.

ROME, *24th June*, 1822.

When I had the pleasure and honour of seeing your Excellency in Rome, I asked your permission to recommend to your protection a young German scholar, engaged in interesting researches, for which the libraries and archives of the kingdom of Naples contain ample materials—materials which, it is to be feared, will remain inaccessible to him, unless some powerful patronage remove the obstacles which the national ignorance, indolence, and vanity, oppose to the labours of foreign scholars in Italy. This young scholar is

M. Pertz, who will have the honour of delivering this letter into your hand. The task which has brought him into Italy is the great enterprise conceived by my friend, Baron Von Stein, of publishing a complete edition, corrected from the best MSS., of the "Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum," from the earliest times to the thirteenth century; authors whose writings are only now extant in very incomplete collections, formed without any care. It is thought desirable to add to this collection inedited documents belonging to our national history, and selected with discrimination from the infinite number which the archives contain.

M. Pertz combines all the knowledge and the talents required for so vast and difficult a work; but his best recommendations are his moral qualities, to which he joins much intelligence and a very sound judgment. In an age which I regard as the commencement of the literary decline of my nation, we may congratulate ourselves on numbering amongst our young scholars a man like him.

At Naples and at La Cava, his inquiries will be principally directed to the history of the Lombards, and that of the princes of the house of Suabia; I am sure, M. le Comte, that though a Frenchman and an ambassador of France, you will not regard Charles I. of Anjou with any predilection, and that you will neither refuse your esteem to the emperor Frederic II., nor your sympathy to his unfortunate grandson.

I had the honour of conversing with you, M. le Comte, on the state of England; if I find sufficient leisure to finish an essay on this subject, written in German, and a safe opportunity of sending it to Naples, allow me to submit it to you.

May the air of Naples produce a salutary and lasting effect upon your health, and invigorate the powers which you will need, sooner or later, for the salvation of your country and of Europe, whose safety depends upon the peaceable settlement of your institutions. It is one of my most earnest wishes that you may recover fully, and I entreat you attentively to watch over the effect upon your health of the air you are now breathing.

It may have appeared singular to you, M. le Comte, that a stranger should have displayed an almost passionate veneration and attachment for you—sentiments with which the simple observation of your public life, and the study of the principles which you have developed, have sufficed to inspire an individual, who had never had the advantage of knowing you personally. But I venture to flatter myself that you will find nothing ridiculous in it, and that you will not disdain the idea of an invisible political church, dispersed among all nations, nor the sentiment which embraces political principles, and directs itself towards those who, unhappily in such small numbers, establish and defend them nobly and courageously. It is this sentiment which I shall ever entertain towards you, M. le Comte, and to the expression of which I will not add any conventional courtesies. NIEBUHR.

The *Concordia* of M. Schlegel, for which you asked me, no longer appears.

CCLXXXVIII.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO A YOUNG MAN WHO WISHED TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO PHILOLOGY.

Written in the Summer of 1822.

When your dear mother wrote me word that you showed a decided inclination to philological studies, I expressed my pleasure in hearing of it, and earnestly entreated her and your father not to interfere with this inclination, by forming other plans for your future life. I think I told her, that as philology is the introduction to all other studies, he who devotes himself to this science during his school years with as much zeal as if it were to form the exclusive vocation of his life, prepares himself for any other that he may choose at the university; and, in the second place, I am so fond of philology myself that I could not select for a youth so near and dear to me as you are any other vocation in preference. There is no pursuit more tranquil and more cheering; none

which, from the occupations it involves, and the duties it imposes, is more calculated to preserve peace of heart and of conscience; and how often have I lamented that I forsook it, and entered upon a life of turmoil, that will probably leave me little chance of lasting repose even in approaching old age. The office of an instructor of youth especially is a most honourable one, and one of the happiest callings in life to a noble heart, despite all the evils which mar its ideal beauty; it was once the object of my voluntary choice, and it would have been well for me if I had been suffered to pursue it unhindered. I am quite conscious that now, having passed my active life in so wide a sphere, I should be spoiled for it; but I would wish any one for whom I have such a hearty and sincere regard as for you, that he might not thus spoil himself, nor long to quit the tranquillity and security of the narrow circle, in which I, like you, passed my youth.

Your dear mother told me that you wished to lay one of your productions before me, in order to give me a proof of your industry, and to enable me to judge of your progress. I begged her to encourage you to do so, not only in order to give you and yours a proof of the sincere interest I take in you, but also because pre-eminently in philology I am sufficiently acquainted with the object to be aimed at, and the paths that lead to it, as well as the wrong roads which one is apt to mistake for them, to be able to fortify one, who had been fortunate enough to find the right road, in his resolution not to leave it, and to have no hesitation in warning one who is in danger of going astray, and telling him whither he is tending if he do not change his course. I myself have made my way for the most part without a guide, and wandered through many a thorny thicket, unfortunately in opposition to the too gentle hints of those who might have led me. Thanks to God and my good fortune, I have never lost sight of my aim, and have always found the right road again, but I should have come much nearer to my goal, and with much less toil and pain, if any one had shown me the way. I am well aware that it was principally out of tenderness

to me that this was not done, and probably, too, some did not like the trouble of making themselves intelligible to a boy at the self-willed age. I know, too, that I should not have relished advice which was not in accordance with my inclination; but if it had come from one qualified to give it, I should certainly have taken it to heart, and it would have been worth much to me now if I had received it; even though it had been harsh, and wounded me to the quick.

I can say with truth, and do so with pleasure, that your production is an honourable testimony to your industry, and that it rejoices me to see how much you have done and learnt in the more than six years since we last saw each other. I see that you have read much, and with attention and love of knowledge. But I must now frankly beg you, in the first place, to examine your Latin, and convince yourself that you are deficient in this particular. I will not reproach you with a few grammatical errors. Upon this point, I am quite of the opinion of my late friend, Spalding, who was least of all impatient of such faults in the school, if their indication had the effect of gradually eradicating them. It is a much more serious defect that you have more than once left a period unfinished; that you use words in an incorrect sense; that your style is inflated and unequal; that your metaphors are illogical.* . . . .

You do not write simply enough to express without pretension a thought that is clear to your own mind. That you cannot give richness and roundness to your style, is no subject for blame; for though there have been some, especially in former times, who by the particularly fortunate guidance given to a peculiar talent, have been able to do this at your age, such perfection is, as a rule, out of the question. Fulness and maturity of expression presuppose a maturity of soul which can only arrive in the progress of its development. But what we always can and always ought to do, is not to strive after the semblance of

* Here follow examples from the Essay, which could interest none but the person to whom the letter was addressed.

more than we can perform, and to think and express ourselves with straightforwardness and correctness. So on this point accept a wholesome rule from me. When you write Latin essays, think out what you mean to say with the greatest distinctness of which you are capable, and clothe it in the most unassuming language. Study the manner in which great authors have formed their periods, and exercise yourself frequently in forming detached sentences upon their model; translate passages so as to break up the periods, and endeavour to restore them when you re-translate the passage into the original. This is an exercise in which you do not need the help of your teacher; do it simply as a preparatory discipline for the use of a riper time. When you write, examine scrupulously whether your language is of one colour. I do not care whether you adopt that of Cicero and Livy, or that of Tacitus and Quintilian; but one age you must select, else the result will be a motley texture, as offensive to a real philologist as if one were to blend the German of 1650 with that of 1800. Try to acquire the art of connecting the sentences, without which all pretended Latin is a downright torture to the reader. And, above all, look sharply after your metaphors; all that are not absolutely faultless are insufferable, and for this very reason it is, that Latin is such a capital school for the formation of a good style; and next to Latin, French, for that also cannot endure anything illogical, about which the Germans are so fatally indifferent in their own language.

You did quite right not to send the two skeleton essays you mention, for it is impossible that you should write anything sensible upon their subjects.

We cannot write separate treatises before we have a vivid conception and an accurate knowledge of the whole of which their subject forms a part, and before we have an adequate acquaintance with the relations of this single part to other classes of facts. Another principle is, that we must advance from the particular to the universal classes of facts, in order really to understand a complex whole. And here we do not need to follow a systematic order, but may yield to

accidental impulses, provided that we proceed with circumspection, and do not overlook the chasms which still exist between the separate portions. I began the actual study of ancient history with Polybius, and was earlier intimate with the age of Cleomenes than with that of Pericles; but I knew that my knowledge was objectively a slight fragment, and that I must have learnt infinitely more, before I could even dream of working up materials that were scattered through many ages, with which I was very imperfectly acquainted, and which had a multitude of relations of which I had no proper conception whatever. I worked on and on, and, when I can, I still work daily, in order to attain a vivid conception of antiquity. You have undertaken to write about the Roman colonies, and their influence upon the State. But it is quite impossible that you can have even a half correct idea of the Roman colonies; and, to speak about their influence on the State, you ought not only to have an insight into the Roman constitution, and an intimate acquaintance with the Roman history, but also to understand politics and the history of politics, all which is as yet absolutely impossible. While I say this to you, I add, that at your age none of us, who have a right to call ourselves philologists, could have written upon this subject; nay, not even Grotius or Scaliger, or Salmasius, who became excellent grammarians at a much earlier age than any of us. The second subject you have mentioned is a still less suitable one for you. You must know enough of antiquity to be aware that the philosophy of youth consisted, up to a much riper age than yours, in silent listening, in the endeavour to understand and to learn. You cannot properly know the facts, far less propound a generalisation, not to say a philosophic one, of facts which are quite insulated, and for the most part problematical. Learning, my dear young friend, conscientious learning,—a constant effort to test and augment our knowledge,—that is our theoretical vocation for life, and especially that of the young who are so fortunate as to be able to surrender themselves, freely, to the charms of the new intellectual world opened to them in books. He who writes

a treatise, let him say what he will, claims to teach, and no one can teach without a degree of wisdom, which is the compensation God gives us, if we strive after it, for the departing bliss of youth. A wise youth is a monster. Further, let none say that he undertakes such compositions for his own sake, in order to explore a particular subject. He who does it with this view makes a mistake, and injures himself. Let him write down in a fragmentary form what he has thought out; but let him not sit down to write, in the hope that thoughts will come by writing. He who attempts to bring into a well-rounded whole, that which cannot even have the shadow of completeness, either internal or external, runs the very greatest risk of contenting himself with semblance and superficialness, and contracting a most injurious facility in bad writing. It is well for the young tree that, planted in a rich soil and good situation, is held in a right direction by a careful hand, and forms solid wood! If its growth is hastened by over-watering, and it is weak and flexible, exposed to the fury of the winds, without shelter and prop, its wood becomes porous, and its trunk crooked for its whole life.

Antiquity may be compared to an immeasurable city of ruins, of which there is not even a ground-plan extant; in which each one must find his way for himself, and learn to understand the whole from the parts,—the parts from a careful comparison and study, and a due consideration of their relation to the whole. If one possessing only a smattering of architectural knowledge, utterly ignorant of hydrostatics, having scarcely seen the greater part of the ruins of Rome, and nothing beyond Rome,—if such a one should undertake to write about the ruins of the aqueducts, he would produce much such a work as a mere student writing a dissertation on some branch of antiquities.

You have therefore done very wisely to choose instead an exegetical treatise. But I must remark, that a student ought to keep within his own sphere; that is, let him not believe that he can contribute anything to the elucidation of a work which has been commentated on by masters.

Exegesis is the fruit of finished study. From the stores of a comprehensive acquaintance with the language and the subjects treated of, it adds to our knowledge of both; it is nothing else than the expression of the meaning as it has been understood, if not by contemporaries, yet at least by people of somewhat later times, to whom the fleeting allusions of the moment were already lost, and it requires a mature and thoroughly cultivated understanding, as well as an infinity of individual observations. The student's part is to show that he has understood the meaning rightly, and to extract the essential points from the commentators, with a statement whence he has derived them.

What I would above all things impress upon you, my dear friend, is to open your heart to a sincere veneration for excellence. It is the best endowment of a youthful mind, and its surest guide.

I must now say a few words to you respecting the style of your composition. It is too bombastic, and you often use inapplicable metaphors. Do not suppose that I am so unreasonable as to require a finished style; I would as little require this of you as of any one at your age; I only warn you against mannerism. All writing should be nothing but the symbol of the thought and speech. You must either write as if really delivering a continuous discourse, in which your genuine thoughts are accurately and fully expressed, or as you would speak if called upon to do so by circumstances in which, indeed, you are not actually placed in real life, but conceive yourself to be, as an author. Everything must be based upon thought, and the thought must shape the structure of the language. To be able to do this, we must apply our study of language, enrich the memory with a copious store of words and phrases, whether in the mother tongue, or in foreign languages, living or dead; sharply define the terms of the former for ourselves, use the latter in their proper sense, and fix their limitation. Exercises in composition for boys and youths ought to have no other object than the development of their thoughts, the enrichment and refining of their language. If our thoughts do

not satisfy us, if we turn and twist in the consciousness of our poverty, writing will become a horrible labour to us, and we shall hardly maintain our courage. This was my case at your age, and for long after. There was no one to enter into my distress, and give the help which can so easily be given at the transition age from boyhood to youth. This difficulty we do not feel if we adopt a fixed style, for then we have the external shape, which is not to be obtained when we work from within outwards; or at least we believe that we have it, and probably find others who suffer themselves to be deceived by the semblance; not indeed those who understand the matter. But with an assumed style you lose all truth, and by degrees all capability of producing anything of value and originality. In order to give an appearance of fulness, the whole is nothing but a hollow form; all your own thoughts become distorted and worthless; you rank yourself among those whom you fancy you resemble in appearance, and you are in reality nothing, and sink down to the lowest class of imitators.

With some facility in seizing on external features, it must be very easy to obtain the mastery of an assumed style, but extremely difficult to shake it off when you have once had the misfortune to be entangled in it. The difficulty of developing and presenting our thoughts is by no means diminished, when we have obtained a clear insight into our subject, while we have at the same time to struggle against a bad habit, and it is seldom that any one can sustain this double conflict. It will require heroic efforts to break yourself of such a habit, if you have long persevered in it. Hence I call upon you all the more earnestly to forsake this path utterly, and most carefully to avoid it for the future. To an assumed style belong all verbose and unmeaning expositions, with a false claim to a deep insight into the mind of the poet.

But, above all things, we must preserve our truthfulness in science so pure, that we must eschew absolutely every false appearance,—that we must not write the very smallest thing as certain, of which we are not fully convinced,—that when

we have to express a conjecture, we must strenuously endeavour to exhibit the precise degree of probability we attach to it. If we do not ourselves indicate our own errors where possible,—even such as it is unlikely that any one will ever discover,—if, when we lay down our pen, we cannot say in the sight of God, "upon strict examination, I have not knowingly written anything that is not true, and have never deceived either regarding myself or others; I have not exhibited my most inveterate opponent in any light which I could not justify upon my death-bed;"—if we cannot do this, then study and literature render us unrighteous and sinful.

In this respect I am conscious that I make no requirements from others, which a superior intelligence reading my soul could accuse me of not having fulfilled. It was this conscientiousness, combined with the perception of what we may and ought to attain in philology, if we wish to come before the public, that made me so shy of publishing for long after I had reached manhood. Often called upon to do so by my dearest friends, not without reproaches, I felt that my hour was not yet come, which certainly, had my life taken a different course, might have come several years earlier.

I am so strict in this respect, that I strongly disapprove of the quite customary practice of quoting at second hand, after verifying the quotations, without naming where we have found them, and never allow myself to do so, tedious as the double reference may be. Whenever I quote a passage without remark, I have found it myself. He who acts otherwise gives himself the appearance of greater reading than he possesses.

I would not blame others who are less strict, if I may assume that it is really perfectly indifferent to them whether or not people suppose them to be more profoundly learned than they really are; or if they say beforehand, as some do, that of course most of the citations are borrowed. But of a young man I require, absolutely and without indulgence, were it only as an exercise of virtue, the most scrupulous truthfulness in literary as in all other matters, that it may become a part of his very nature, or rather that the

truthfulness which God has implanted in his nature may remain there. With this weapon alone can we fight our way through the world. The hour in which my Marcus should tell an untruth, or give himself the semblance of a merit that he did not possess, would make me very unhappy; it would be the fall in paradise.

I come now to another part of my business in giving you counsel. I wish you had less pleasure in satires, not excepting those of Horace. Turn to the works which elevate the heart,—in which you contemplate great men and great events, and live in a higher world; turn away from those which represent the mean and contemptible side of ordinary circumstances and degenerate days. They are not suitable for the young, who in ancient times would not have been suffered to have them in their hands. Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Pindar, these are the poets for youth; these are they on which the great men of antiquity were nourished, and which, as long as literature illumines the world, will ennoble for life the youthful soul that is filled with them. Horace's odes may also benefit the young as a standard style formed upon the Greek model, and it is a pity that a contempt for them has spread, which is only allowable and not arrogant in the case of a very small number of masters in philology. In the "Sermones" Horace is original and more pithy, but he who can understand them must read them with melancholy; a beneficial effect they can never have. We see a noble-minded man, who, from inclination and reflection, tries to make himself comfortable in an unhappy period, and has surrendered himself to a bad philosophy, which does not prevent his remaining honourable, but leads him to take a low view of things. His morality is based solely upon the principle of the Fitting, the Becoming, the Reasonable; nay, he declares the Wholesome (to use the most favourable expression) to be the source of the idea of Right. Wickedness is distasteful to him, and excites him—not to anger, but to a gentle reproof. That feeling for virtue which impels us to persecute vice, and which we find not only in Tacitus, but also in Juvenal—in the latter with frightful severity—seems to have no place

in his mind. Juvenal, however, with the exception of a few fragments, you ought to leave absolutely untouched for the present, and you lose nothing by it; for if you are allowed to read him, it does harm at your age to dwell on the contemplation of vice, instead of pondering noble thoughts. On the poets I have mentioned, and on Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Plutarch, Cicero, Livy, Cæsar, Sallust, Tacitus, among prose writers, I earnestly entreat you to fix your attention, and to confine yourself exclusively to them. Do not read them in order to make æsthetic reflections upon them, but in order to drink in their spirit, and to fill your soul with their thoughts,—in order to gain that by reading, which you would have gained by reverently listening to the discourses of great men. This is the philology which does the soul good; and learned investigations, even when we have got so far as to be able to make them, always occupy an inferior place. We must be fully masters of grammar (in the ancient sense); we must acquire every branch of antiquarian knowledge as far as lies in our power; but even if we can make the most brilliant emendations, and explain the most difficult passages at sight, all this is nothing, and mere sleight of hand, if we do not acquire the wisdom and spiritual energy of the great men of antiquity,—think and feel like them.

For the study of language, I recommend to you especially Demosthenes and Cicero. Select, in the former, the Oration "pro Coronâ;" in the latter, the "pro Cluentio," and read them with all the thoughtfulness of which you are capable: then go through them so that you could give account of every word and every phrase; draw a sketch of their argument; try to get a clear idea of all the historical circumstances, and to bring them into order. This will give you an immense amount of labour, and from it you will learn how little we can know, and, consequently, you do know. Apply then to your tutor, not in order to surprise him with unexpectedly difficult problems; for there are—in the Cluentiana, for instance—difficulties with regard to facts which the profoundest student can only solve by hypotheses which do not present themselves immediately to any scholar; but that he

may be so kind as to consult and think over the passages on which you have exhausted your powers and resources. In the Cluentiana, develop the system of indictment. Make collections of words and expressions, especially epithets with their substantives, and the original sense of the figurative expressions. Translate; after a few weeks turn your translation back again into the original language.

Besides this grammatical work, read those great authors one after the other with greater freedom; but after having finished a book or a section, recall what you have read by an act of memory, and indicate the contents with the greatest brevity. Then besides, write down expressions and phrases that particularly occur to you; so too you ought to write down every new word immediately, and read over the list at night.

Let critics and emendators alone for the present. The time will come when you will be able to read them with profit. The artist must first learn to draw, before he begins to use colours, and he must know how to handle the ordinary colours, before he decides for or against the use of transparent tints. About writing I have spoken to you already. Do not read all that comes to hand, even of ancient authors; there are plenty of bad ones among them. Æolus only permitted the one wind to blow that was to waft Ulysses to his destination, and bound the rest; unchained, and blowing all at once, they caused him endless wanderings.

Study history after a double mode, according to the persons and according to the states. Make systematic surveys frequently.

The advice that I give you, I should give to every one in your place. The censure I should have to give to very many. Do not suppose that I am unaware of this, and that I do not joyfully give you full credit for your industry.

The study which I require of you makes very little show, advances slowly, and it will perhaps depress you to see a long series of years before you, exclusively devoted to acquirement. But, my dear fellow, truly to learn and to acquire, is the true good of theoretical life, and our lifetime

is not so short. But long as it may be, we have ever to go on learning. Thank God that it is so!

And now, may God bless your labours, and give you the right disposition, that you may carry them on to your own welfare and happiness, to the joy of your parents, and of all of us who have your virtue and respectability sincerely at heart.

1823.

In March, 1823, Niebuhr and his family went to Naples, where they spent five weeks in examining the remarkable places in its neighbourhood, and he explored the public libraries. At the Royal Library, he undertook the revision of a Manuscript, in his opinion very important—that of the grammarian, Charisius. His leisure hours were spent with de Serre, with whom he contracted a friendship such as is rarely found in later life, and carried on a regular correspondence up to de Serre's death.

On leaving Naples, Niebuhr returned to Rome, visited for the last time, with his son, the scenes and spots that were dearest to him, and then, after a sorrowful parting with Chevalier and Madame Bunsen, and a few of his younger friends, set out on his journey to Florence, whence he proceeded, by way of Bologna, Verona, and Ferrara, to St. Gall.

Here he passed some weeks, partly to recruit his health, and partly to examine the MSS. in the celebrated Library of that place. He found that most of them were of a theological character; but, among the exceptions, he discovered the Panegyric of Merobaudes, which he revised and prepared for publication during his stay there. From St. Gall, he went to Heidelberg, to visit two of his earliest friends—the aged Voss, and Thibaut, his companion at college. He next visited Bonn, in order to see Professor Brandis, and, after remaining there some time, determined to select it as his place of residence until it should be finally decided whether or not he returned to Rome.

Letters written in 1823.

CCLXXXIX.

TO COUNT ADAM MOLTKE.

ROME, *8th February*, 1823.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You must ascribe my long silence simply and solely to awkwardness. As I did not immediately answer the letter by which you offered me an opportunity of renewing our correspondence, after your visit to Rome, I have been waiting all this long time for some other occasion on which I could begin writing to you. But, though I am sufficiently inclined in general to self-reproach, I think I may be forgiven in this instance for not having answered your letter immediately. Everything came on us at once; my wife's confinement, &c., the effects of which lasted long afterwards; the negotiations on ecclesiastical affairs; and the Neapolitan insurrection and Punchinello-revolution, which threatened us here with an unpleasant farce. Then followed such a winter of perpetual society and dissipation as I never underwent before; in short, so much time passed over without my fulfilling the duty which a kind Heaven had pointed out, that I was at last too much ashamed to write.

The particular reason of my writing to you at last, my dear old friend, is as follows: Dora mentions the betrothal of your Charles as an event about which she has already written to us, but this is a mistake. I know nothing more than the bare fact, but it is enough to make me greet you again, and wish you and your Charles every blessing; and I doubt not, nay, I have the fullest confidence, that this decision for his life will be so fortunate, that his friend may rejoice over it with his father. May God grant it, and preserve his paths from the thorns on which you have been forced to tread! Our youth fell in a time of illusions and hopes; the youth of the present age, who are kept close to realities almost as *our* fathers were, have a right to demand other compensations from Fate.

That I never once made use of your residence in Rome to unite the present with departed days, is one of the things —there are not few of them—for which I can never be consoled, which will embitter the retrospect of my life in my last hour. It was as though a spell lay upon me; I felt that it would be enough to utter one word; once to give vent to the emotions of the heart in tears. But I could not unclose my lips to speak that word. The past could not rise again from its grave, and I felt as though it would have shaken the foundations of that present which it is now the duty of my life to preserve and develop.

When you had left, I would gladly have hastened after you, and spent one day more with you, at whatever cost. Thus I suffered under a torturing constraint, which still rends my heart whenever I think of that time which might have refreshed and strengthened me, as far as is still possible for me. My mind is like a nation that has passed through a revolution, and now must proceed in a new order, as the old order is irrecoverably destroyed. I economise the little still left out of my old treasures, recognising now how inexpressibly valuable was what I once possessed; and with what the new time has brought me, I teach myself to fulfil my duties, and take the relations of life as they come.

My position here has one essential defect, that I cannot satisfy the requirements of those who have no possible claim upon me but through my official station; that I cannot afford to keep open house for idle travellers, and would rather bear their anger at my doing nothing, than their contempt for what I might offer. Rome has become the chief place of amusement for the collective idleness of Europe, and even if the ministry would give me the means of undertaking a *rôle* in this dissipation, it would be terrible to waste one's time upon it.

This consideration makes it less difficult for me to resign my present office, although we have but a very uncertain future before us, and I will not deny that the prospect of returning to Germany gives me some uneasiness. But

Gretchen's feelings are the deciding point; she feels that the air here is poison to her, and so there was nothing more to consider.

Our chief care is to find a place where I may spend the remaining years of my life without the necessity of a further change. Other things being nearly equal, we shall certainly choose to settle as far as possible from the Russian frontier.

My Marcus is a boy of excellent capacities; his education amidst antiquity has been perfectly successful. The old world is to him the true and real one; the modern only something accidental. This will undoubtedly render some bitter discoveries necessary in the future. Ancient history and mythology are as familiar to him as to a Roman boy eighteen hundred years ago, and he is burning with sympathy and sheds tears for the heroes of the Trojan time, over the literal Latin translation of the Odyssey which to us seems so miserable. He looks forward confidently to climbing Parnassus, and seeing Jupiter and the old gods there, of whom I told him the modern Greek tradition, that they have taken refuge on the summit of the mountain.

When you were here, my friend, we spoke often, as you will remember, of de Serre; it is the happiest result of my residence in this city, that *he* has been here, and that we have become intimate friends. As the ancients wrote to, and for, an individual, I mean to write for him a short compendious narrative of the Roman History through all its centuries. Is de Serre still called a thorough-going servant of despotism by the German liberals? There are cabinets in which he is held to be a mad poetical visionary, and no doubt a revolutionist.

Farewell, my dear friend, and if you have not quite effaced me from your memory, write to me about your Charles. . . . .

Your old friend,

NIEBUHR.

CCXC.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

ROME, *9th February*, 1823.

M. LE COMTE,

I shall profit by a perfectly safe opportunity to send you some reflections on the state of England. You will receive them with kindness, but I do not recommend them the less to your indulgence.*

On that country I have a right to form an opinion; I have a right to except against that of the English, and to criticise it, as much as if the question related to my own country, and the opinion of my fellow-countrymen respecting its state, for I know England as well as if I had been born there. I was taught the language in my earliest childhood, and from the age of ten years I was in the constant habit of reading the English journals; my father sent me there to finish my studies, and to become acquainted with the political and civil life of a free people, as well as to study rural economy, commerce, the application of chemistry to the arts, and lastly, finance. With introductions from him (who, though little known at home, was the object of universal respect in England,) to the most eminent men of that country, I was as if naturalised there; and, after having quitted it, I continued to watch with the same interest the minutest details of its circumstances, and have followed its moral, political, and financial history, for the last twenty years, with an attention which even such events as those of 1806 and 1813 have rarely sufficed to diminish. And the more I occupied all my leisure moments with researches into the history of the institutions and laws of the nations of antiquity, the more I was led to turn my attention to the history of England, among those states, where the free institutions of the middle ages have maintained themselves for a more or less lengthened period, and where even important changes—as, for instance, in the tenure of property—

* This Essay, entitled "Ueber England's Zukunft," is published in Niebuhr's "Nachgelassene Schriften," p. 426.

have been brought to pass in the course of their natural development. Lastly, I have more especially devoted my attention to the finance of England, on account of a work, the idea of which I conceived some years ago; namely, a history of the finances of all European states from the peace of 1783, preceded by a picture of their condition at that epoch, and terminated by a statement of the results.

I beg, M. le Comte, that you will simply consider this explanation as a statement of the circumstances which make me feel myself entitled to discuss, without presumption, the questions treated of in my little essay.

In reasoning, on the future, I have asked myself, what should I do in Mr. Canning's place, *with his principles and his character?* Will you be one of those who would now accuse me of attributing reckless audacity to him with injustice? I think not.

It was by similar chains of reasoning, that I always used to divine the projects of Napoleon, and even the plans of his campaigns.

England must choose between two futures. Has she the will and the power to adopt a manly and virtuous policy? Then she will occupy herself with the moral reformation of society; she will renounce the project of domineering over and weakening the Continent of Europe; and she will leave the growth of the America of the North in the hands of Providence: she may deplore a war with Spain, but she will not give a mortal blow to the restoration in France. Is she willing to brave the greatest dangers, confident that she can surmount them, and to found an empire such as no power may dare to attack? Then she will adopt precisely the course which I have traced out.

In writing for you, M. le Comte, I have thought it unnecessary to add to my prophecies the restrictions, if *such or such an event happen*, by which on other occasions one is obliged to guard against the taunt, often little merited, of having predicted events which are not realised. Unforeseen accidents may arrest Mr. Canning in his career; for myself, I simply say that he will arrive at the results

which I have indicated, if, as everything leads us to believe, he is able to advance without restraint.

Have you ever read in Germany a paper of Lessing's, which alarms pious persons, but which is none the less worthy of a profound philosopher, "*die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts?*" * There is in that paper a sentence of the deepest significance: "The enthusiast," he says, "and the philosopher are frequently only at variance as to the epoch in the future at which they place the accomplishment of their efforts. The enthusiast does not recognise the slowness of the pace of time. An event not immediately connected with the time in which he lives is to him a nullity." Do not attribute to me the idea that the defects, which as I think are eating into the vital principle of England, threaten her existence in our times, or those of our children. My views would admit of development to a very much greater extent with regard to Ireland and other points; but these rapidly sketched pages would then extend into a volume.

During the few weeks yet remaining of our stay in Rome, I shall have absolutely no time to write you the essay on Roman history for which you asked me. It shall be my occupation at Baden Baden. I feel warmly grateful to you for having asked me for it. The ancients wrote for the friend to whom they dedicated a book; this gives marked characteristics to what is written; this enables one to dispense with precautions against the misapprehensions of such and such readers. It is an inestimable advantage to me that you understand our language so well; in writing, for the future, I shall fancy that I am speaking to you. Atticus wrote an abstract of the history of Rome for the use of his friend Cicero; may I not recall this example on my own behalf? . . . .

Society here is about to abandon itself to amusements during the carnival. There is something fearful in these pitiable amusements at a moment when all our lives are in the balance. What a despicable generation is this of ours! I even prefer the Greeks of Constantinople, quarrelling

* The Education of the Human Race.

about their theological disputes, to our contemporaries, who require diversions for their *ennui*, who flock to balls on the eve of a universal crisis, which is teaching us all *how precious was the time by which we neglected to profit.* For my own part, I share in the feelings of a dying man who reproaches himself for not having employed his life well. Lent and its silence will be a relief to me. I have just bought a copy of Leonardo da Vinci.

. . . . As you do me the honour of allowing me to plan your Italian library, I would warmly recommend to you the Florentine History of Varchi, if you can find a complete copy of it; almost all are mutilated. In reading this author, I have seen that we may be incredibly circumstantial, and yet rivet the attention. It will make you acquainted with a great man—Ferrucci—of whom there are so few! . . . .

CCXCI.

ROME, 25*th February*, 1823.

. . . . I have sent word to Cardinal Gonsalvi that you wish to be informed of the state of his health. Your interest in him has given him the most lively pleasure, and he sends you his sincere acknowledgments. Alas! I have no agreeable news to give you on this subject. . . . . It appears to me certain that the seat of the disease is the œsophagus, and that the nerves of the ganglion are attacked. I am not aware whether you think it allowable to believe in animal magnetism, but for my part I have faith in it, and I believe that if cure were possible in this case, it must be sought in this remedy. . . . .

I have read with terror the speeches in the English parliament. I regret that I did not take notes of the number of the "*Espectador*," a journal in which M. de St. Miguel wrote at that time, in which last year his Britannic Majesty, now the ally of Don Miguel, was accused of having poisoned his daughter, his wife, and Napoleon!

I shudder when I think of the future. The infatuated men have brought us to the point of having put England,

and the English ministry, at the head of the revolutionary party. There are some ministers who ought to follow the example of Lord Londonderry. . . . .

CCXCII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

NAPLES, *8th April*, 1823.

We have been here a week, and, as is always the case with a season of great enjoyment, the time slips away very quickly, and it makes me sad to think that a quarter of that which we can spend here is already over. It is years certainly since I spent such happy days. In this elastic atmosphere you feel elastic; the sense of weight and lassitude which diffuses itself through your whole body in Rome, at least if you remain long there without a break, vanishes in Naples. I believe it was not without reason, and not merely for the sake of the scenery, that the old Romans regularly visited their country houses on the shores of this bay. Sky, earth, and sea, compose a whole which certainly far transcends my expectations; and in de Serre's society I have all that my heart and intellect have so long and sorely missed, and there is a friendship between our families which already extends even to the children. I really feel several years younger, and able to work hard without a laborious effort.

We arrived here on Marcus's birth-day. The whole journey had been a festival to him, and it was a deep joy to us to perceive his open susceptibilities to all these new impressions. We felt how much he had developed and improved during the past year, on comparing him with his former self. It is an inestimable advantage for him that we have remained here so long, for, in his own way, he enjoys everything, antiquities and nature, like a grown person, and with all the bliss of childhood superadded. No, I do not think that any one ever had a happier childhood! The night before his birthday, we slept at a little place called St. Agata; we had stopped at midday at Mola (it was a most beautiful day), to feast our eyes on the bay and the prospect

towards Gaeta. The boy was intoxicated with delight, and his ecstacy kept his soul awake to the last second, when his body was long since quite tired out. When he was in bed, he clung round his mother's neck, and said in German, "Mother, how *very* happy I am that God has given me such a good father and mother, and such good sisters!" My heart was very tender, and I could not help begging his pardon, because I once punished him severely for a piece of mischief which Lucia had done, and not he, but we were compelled to believe that he was the culprit, and was trying to screen himself by a lie; I said that I had been unjust to him: "No, father, that you never were!" he answered with the greatest warmth. . . . .

A manuscript which I must collate, at least in all the important passages, in order to be justified in editing a work which has been printed from very bad copies of the same, takes up much of my time, which might be spent more pleasantly; but I think I ought not to lose this opportunity, as it is scarcely probable that any one else will be found to undertake a task which has been left undone for three centuries. The people here are very obliging; and when I have finished this task, I mean to embrace the unexpected offer of permission to read the fac-similes of the Herculanean papyrus-rolls, the proof sheets of which have been already printed from copper-plates, but which are not yet published.

Of the knavery of the people we had a strong proof, in the sum they asked for unloading our carriage, else they cannot be worse than those we have left, and their vivacity is a strong recommendation to them compared with the lifeless indolence of the Romans. It certainly tends to make one judge them more favourably that we have lived so many years in Italy, and have long since ceased to make the demands, the non-fulfilment of which plunges any foreigner into despair, who cannot indemnify himself by a general enthusiasm. At Terracina you begin to meet with southern scenery and southern productions; the oranges at Rome are sour, and we have often remarked that we had never eaten such bad ones in Germany; the Sicilian ones

here certainly possess a perfection such as they never retain when brought across the sea to the north. But the difference of the climate is shown most strikingly by the fact, that it is advisable here when the sun has shone into a room, to open the window in the evening in order not to suffer from the sultry air during the night; while it was only a few days before we left Rome, that we could do altogether without a fire, and most likely should not have given it up so soon except in prospect of the journey. . . . .

CCXCIII.

NAPLES, 29*th April*, 1823.

. . . . I have seen a great deal of de Serre, and this short period of uninterrupted intimate intercourse has so perfected our friendship as to secure its steady duration, even if we should never meet again. I revere him more than ever, from seeing him in all the relations of life, and I now say, as an eye-witness, what I was convinced of before, from the picture which I had formed of him to myself, that his character is as perfectly virtuous and as spotless in its purity, as he is great as a man, and rare as a genius.

His family is certainly one of the happiest on the face of the earth; a lively and sensible wife who admires her husband, and is proud of him, whom he loves very tenderly; his children are the objects of his warmest affection. All who belong to the embassy belong to the family, and even the servants who have come here with them, seem rather to be in the position of faithful retainers than domestics. The interior of the family has no more the tone of the fashionable world than belongs to his position as a representative of his country, and this tone appears only when his official position is in question, which is very seldom; at other times his mode of life, notwithstanding the size of the establishment, and the elegance of the apartments, is quite that of a commoner, and you enter into all the arrangements and feelings of the family quite as you would with people of our class. De Serre's long residence in Germany, particularly

in his youth, during the emigration, his intimate acquaintance with our language and literature, his taste for them, the many vicissitudes through which he has passed, the necessity of earning his bread as an advocate after his return, have certainly brought to extraordinary perfection, one of the rarest spirits that nature has ever created. Conscious of his powers, all his external gifts of fortune are to him neither a possession of value, nor a fetter.

We see each other daily, and often more than once in the day; we have made excursions together as far as the weather would permit, and farther. . . . .

CCXCIV.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

ROME, 18*th March*, 1823.

. . . . The new Chancellor of the Exchequer proves himself incomparably superior to his predecessor, the inept Mr. Vansittart, so extolled in the semi-official pamphlet which appeared last year. His financial statement deserves full confidence, with one correction, which is, however, very essential; namely, the following:

I adopt his estimate of the receipts, as they would be if no duties had been repealed, at 52,200,000*l.* Deducting the amount of these duties, we shall have rather under 50,000,000*l.*; but I do not doubt that the revenues will reach this amount, or perhaps rather more.

He has, however, no right to add to these receipts the 4,850,000*l.* due from the Trustees of Half-pay and Pensions, because these Commissioners will only have this money by borrowing it; which reduces the real surplus to 150,000*l.*, and annihilates the Sinking Fund. I need hardly remind you that I do not regard this as a great evil for England.

Such is the reality which I can vouch for; and I suspect that the very imperfect manner in which these discussions are reported in the English journals, conceals a result still less favourable. I do not find in the statement of expenses the 2,050,000*l.*, which, with the 2,800,000*l.* constitutes the

4,850,000*l.* to be advanced by the Trustees of Half-pay and Pensions. Now I attribute this omission simply to the ignorance of those who report the Parliamentary debates in the journals. The new Minister has wished to make a sensation, to inspire Europe with admiration, but I can scarcely bring myself to believe that he has been guilty of a piece of low cunning, such as the Ministers of absolute monarchs not unfrequently indulge in. Still, it seems evident to me that this sum ought to be added to the expenses, and then the balance would stand as follows:

Total expenses without the sum to be borrowed on annuities for the Pension List	£49,852,786
Sum to be borrowed in order to pay the Pension List . .	2,050,000
	£51,902,786
Total receipts, after the suppression of the duties, which will be paid however for the first half year	£50,000,000
From which will result a deficit of	£1,902,786

You will smile at my saying that this budget merits all confidence, when I nevertheless destroy its results. I ought to have said that all the facts are exact; but that the calculations should be corrected.*

What the Minister says respecting the reforms and retrenchments made in the administration, admits of no doubt, and does great honour to the government.

There is however nothing alarming in this deficit, even if it should not disappear before the more ample information which I shall endeavour to obtain from London itself; it will simply force the government to adopt at last the only existing course by which the finances of England can be saved; namely, to change the system of taxation entirely, in the manner which I have indicated.† The opinions of Mr. Ricardo and Lord Somers prove that the most correct thinkers in England are beginning to have a glimpse of its

* The actual receipts of the year 1823 including £4,678,000 received from the Trustees of the Naval and Military Pensions, amounted to £57,672,999, the actual expenditure to £50,962,014.

† In the Essay "Ueber England's Zukunft."

necessity, its indispensable necessity. The repeal of taxes avails nothing, and is not the effect of abundance in the finances; it is the effect of an inevitable necessity and ought to be compensated by a property tax.

The budget altogether is not a financial, but a political matter. Hence I cannot conceive how it is, that, out of England, people do not examine it, nor test the calculations.

This would frustrate the policy of the English Minister; but the refutation ought not to exaggerate anything.

An infinity of facts have come to my knowledge lately, and confirm what I have written upon England. Thus a landowner declares that he would be content to sell for 21,000*l.*, an estate for which he paid 72,000*l.* in 1810.

Have you heard, M. le Comte, that Count Munster had informed the Hanoverian envoys, that the King of England, as King of Hanover, entirely approves the resolutions of Verona; and that he is even convinced that Europe would fall a prey to revolution if the allied powers displayed less energy? It is evident that they fear a continental war which might endanger Hanover.

The French post of to-day will bring you deplorable news! So the men who now exclude a colleague,* without being authorised to do so, by a regulation which is undoubtedly too indulgent, but which is the law, are in part the same who rejected your proposition for increasing the authority of the president.

M. Wicar had promised me to call at last on the picture-dealer to-day to examine the Filippo Lippi; I do not know if he has kept his promise; he has not come to inform me of the result. The picture-dealer, whom I requested to be at

* During the debates in the French Chamber of Deputies on the proposed war with Spain, in order to suppress the Constitution and restore absolutism, M. Manuel, deputy for La Vendée was excluded from the Chamber, by a vote of the ultra-royalist majority, for having used the expression "You wish to save the life of Ferdinand, and forget that the Stuarts were overthrown because they sought the aid of France,—that Louis the Sixteenth's head fell, because foreigners mixed themselves in the cause of France." These words were declared to be a defence of regicide, although Manuel explained that he had used them with the contrary intention.

home to receive Wicar, has sent me word that Wicar is his enemy; I hope it has not come to poniards.

I rejoice in your acquisitions in pictures. What a pity it is that the riches of Italy are almost exhausted!

I, too, cannot help believing that there are affinities between the convulsions of the physical world, and those of the moral order of things. I venture to predict that, in twenty or thirty years, a terrible plague will devastate Europe. In three or four hundred years, it will be possible to calculate the increase or diminution of the human race, and the change in the maximum of heat and cold, &c.

Au revoir, Count, if the communications of Wicar do not occasion you another letter before my departure. Meanwhile, permit me to assure you once more of the unchangeable devotion of my heart. NIEBUHR.

CCXCV.*

The reduction of the rate of interest on the State debt is extremely facilitated by the existence of another stock, to which it is desirable to reduce it.

If none such exist, the fund-holder will estimate the indemnity which is due to him, in proportion to the interest; he will consider himself injured if you do not offer him 125 of nominal capital for 100, when you wish to reduce the five per cent. to four per cent.

If more than one kind of stock exists, at different rates of interest, their respective prices will have fixed themselves in very different proportions, for they are regulated by two efficients of unlike nature; namely, the annual product as an investment, and the expectation of a rise when it may be desirable to part with them. Moreover, experience proves that, in all cases, state bonds bearing a smaller interest, fetch a higher price in proportion than those bearing higher interest. Thus, before 1780, the Dutch bonds at two-and-a-half per cent., fetched one hundred and eight per cent., those

* This paper bears no date, but it seems to be in its place here, although it may possibly have been written somewhat earlier.

at three per cent., only from one hundred and ten to one hundred and twelve. It is superfluous to cite the example of the English and American funds.

Up to the financial operations of Mr. Pelham, England had alleviated the burden of her public debt by arbitrary reductions, after the example of Holland, of the various states of Italy, of Spain, not to speak of France, the only one which it is usual to decry as an act characterised by violence. Mr. Pelham found himself obliged to obtain a semblance of voluntary assent on the part of the stock-holders; but the great difficulty found in carrying out Sir John Barnard's plan, arose from the absence of a regulating stock, bearing interest below four per cent. For this reason, it was necessary to wait till the funds had risen much above par, and even then to expose themselves to the risk of failure.

Mr. Pitt did all that he could to augment the mass of the five per cents., in order that his successors might one day have it in their power to diminish the burden of the debt very sensibly; it was in order to render this operation feasible that he made so much effort to give importance to the four per cents. Through pusillanimity Mr. Vansittart did not accomplish till 1822, what he might have done in 1818.

If there existed in France a stock at four per cent., as well as the five per cents., it is indubitable that the latter being at ninety per cent., the four per cents. would be at seventy-eight or eighty, instead of seventy-two. The foreigner, speculating in the French funds, would prefer them to those of which the price would be more nearly at par, for his imagination would represent to him a profit of a quarter instead of that of a ninth: the amount of this stock would be more limited than that of the five per cents., which would necessarily produce a more considerable rise than the investment of the same sum; finally, small capitals would be invested in it to a greater extent.

I could have wished that the opportunity had been embraced of creating a stock at five per cent., when the treasury sold the twelve and a half millions of stock, or else when the reimbursement took place.

Undoubtedly this operation could not have been accomplished without making up your mind to some loss, since the exchequer ought to have the whole sum reimbursed, which it had expended in the purchase of the stock that it had been necessary to realise. But I am inclined to think, —so far as one has a right to form an opinion at such a distance,—that this loss would not have been very considerable: at any rate, there would have been no need to create fifteen millions, instead of twelve and a half, to obtain the same sum. I believe that the commissioners might have gradually drawn out the four per cents. on the Exchange, that the five per cents. would have risen more than they have done, and that they might have had the satisfaction of ending by investing a part of the four per cents. at the same price at which the grand negotiation was concluded.

You will pardon a foreigner the quaint expression, that there exists a species of emulation between the different kinds of public funds of the same nature, which impels them all forward when they are inclined to rise. Without a stock at four per cent, that at five per cent. would with difficulty rise above par, and till it should have exceeded par, a reduction of the interest of the debt could produce no result of sufficient importance.

In no wise personally interested that this measure should be some day carried out with success, and before long, it being in fact rather contrary to my interest, since I am not at all inclined to sell what I possess in the five per cents., it is for the interest of Europe in general, that I desire to see those brilliant ameliorations effected in France, which will ensure gratitude and respect to the government.

CCXCVI.

ROME, *9th May*, 1823.

My beloved and revered friend, this letter to you is the first I have written since my arrival in this city, now almost become a home to me. Yours had arrived here before we had completed our tedious journey, and was the first I read after that of a friend of my youth, who, for a period of almost thirty years, has guided my life like a guardian angel, and who now stands before me and above me like a departed spirit in a better world; a friend who has awakened in me the best powers of my heart and mind, and roused them to action.

I have no words to tell you, how heartily I love you, and how acutely I miss your presence and your society. They could be only words of passion, which I can no longer utter. The time spent with you and yours, was the happiest that we have passed in Italy, and, through you, Naples will remain a hallowed spot in our memory as long as we live. Any real blessing we have once enjoyed is, in its best part, imperishable; and for old age, on the borders of which I stand, there can remain but little beside recollections. Still I fancy if I could live with you, I should grow young again instead of growing old.

I have learnt to know you as a husband and father; and my affection for you has found new and rich food; my wife and children cling to you and yours with that cordiality, without which the friendship of two men who are fathers of families must always remain imperfect. I esteem you happy in your household blessings, and congratulate myself that I have no reason to envy you in that respect. I constantly think of your wife with esteem, and with the pleasure which her bright, energetic, graceful ways inspire, and which is heightened by all that surrounds her; your children dwell in my heart as if they were of my own kindred.

My wife, who had been accustomed to frank sociability, had for years painfully felt the want of it here. She found

it in your house, and if she gained strength in Naples, it was certainly much less owing to the air and the neighbourhood of the sea, which she had been used to from her childhood, than to you and your dear wife. Marcus will never forget you, and the thought of your approval or disapproval will, I trust, ever remain with him, as it is now, a powerful incentive to good. As he grows older, and able to understand it, he will hear more and more of you, and the love with which he clings to you, is a holy sentiment whose preservation will be one of my first cares. He and the little ones remember your children with childish friendship, and your wife with gratitude and love.

We all pray that God's richest blessings may accompany you and your family, and the pious lips of the innocent children only echo the voice of their hearts. We pray that all the happiness you possess may be preserved to you; that you may have a vocation worthy of your noble mind, and receive a blessing in this vocation! These sentiments are our thanks for all your love and kindness, and for the happy time that we owe to you.

Hearty thanks for your letters, with which your fatherland will be no foreign land to us. To your relations and friends I shall be able to speak of you out of the fulness of my heart; here I cannot, excepting with a few young friends.

CCXCVII.

ROME, *9th May*, 1823.

My revered friend, I shall try a commercial route to announce to you some tidings, which are in every point of view important to you.

It seems an understood thing that the King of Naples will remain at Vienna during the whole of this summer; or rather, it is said here, that this is quite certain.

But what I have to tell you now will sound to you quite incredible; and yet on closer consideration you will find it very probable.

It has been represented to your ministry, and they perceive themselves, that it might probably be impossible to get possession of the person of the King of Spain while hunting, and that yet the Junta could not supply the place of the monarch for any length of time. It has therefore been proposed to allow King Ferdinand of Naples, as his uncle, to be nominated to the regency, but with the condition that he shall appoint a substitute. He will hardly choose the Duke of Angoulême as his delegate. The nomination is to take place when the Junta is installed at Madrid; and it is positively asserted that this city will be occupied on the 28th.*. Immediately upon this, the Count Brunetti will come forward in his capacity of Austrian ambassador

The objects of all this are as clear as day.

Two Spanish privateers have appeared before Civita Vecchia. This has suspended all the shipments of corn to Marseilles, which had just begun with fair prospects.

I say nothing to you about the proclamation of the Junta. You probably know that Eguia is a decrepit, avaricious general, without any personal weight. Of the other two I know nothing.

Give me to understand whether this letter reaches your hands uninjured. If you are sure of it, write to me when you find it necessary to be quite secure of secresy, under cover of a Neapolitan firm to ——, at Rome, or if I have left Italy, in the same way to St. Gall, addressed to ——.

The new Austrian postal regulations, to which the unpardonable detention of the correspondence at Bologna has certainly afforded a justification, place the whole correspondence of Italy under police *surveillance*. As regards the speedy dispatch of letters to Germany this is evidently an advantage; but even the letters to Parma must go *by way of Mantua*.

With all my heart your friend.

* The Duke of Angoulême entered Madrid on the 24th of April.

CCXCVIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ROME, 11*th May*, 1823.

It goes to my very heart to think that this is the last letter I shall write to you from Rome. We live now like travellers in another house, quite in a different quarter. Yesterday I went with Marcus to our old home, which the owner is having altered and newly arranged for himself. It was like visiting a tomb. During the most gloomy times of our sojourn here, his house has always seemed cheerful to me. The side entrance is close to the remains of the semicircle of the theatre, once so magnificent. The house itself is built upon the ruin. You ascend a high and narrow flight of steps, enter a lofty, dimly-lighted antechamber, and turning to the right, find yourself in an apartment, from which the different parts of the dwelling-house recede at right angles, inclosing a garden on the same level, as both the house and the garden stand on arches and fragments that formed the first story of the colossal ruin. Here, all that we saw of Rome was the point of a single cupola, and we heard no sound, but the fall of a fountain in the garden. The owner is having everything altered; the whole court was crowded with beasts of burden bringing building materials; our sitting-room was full of workmen, who were employed on one side in building up the windows, and on the other in breaking through the walls, in order to change the windows into glass doors, opening on the garden. The marble steps beneath the windows, on which all the children had played in their turns, were already broken up—fruit-pieces, painted in fresco, which had been a constant source of delight to them, were knocked away —where they had so often played and wept, there was no sound but the pick-axe of the workmen;—that garden, the centre of the whole abode, where we had so often walked up and down, unless the weather were extraordinarily unfavourable, was now desolate and as still as death,—most

of the rooms were shut up, and of one or two only could we obtain a glimpse by peeping through shutters or keyholes. The sight of what we had lost had made our hearts heavy: this scene of destruction and the death-like silence lacerated them. Marcus has both tender and deep feelings; he was affected, as I was. The demolition had even extended to the paintings on the ceiling, in which the stories of Paradise and the patriarchal times were represented, though not by a master's hand, still greatly to the delight of the children, whose eyes were constantly attracted thither by the beautiful effects of colour. They were already bespattered with white-wash, and as they had long been partially injured, while the poverty-stricken owner (who has lately made a rich match) allowed his princely dwelling to fall to decay, they were now destined to destruction. We went round in silence, and I told my boy, that as we wished to visit the Aventine once more, we would afterwards return to gather a few flowers for the last time in our beloved garden. We continued our walk in silence and sadness; the boy, who always tries to conceal sorrow, complained that he was tired, and that his feet hurt him; we sat down on an old wall, and he crept close to me. Even running down a path, along which I had often led him, hardly seemed to comfort him; he took leave of the river, the "pons Sublicius," the island. "Yet I am not so sorry as you are, papa," he said, "for I shall see it all again when I grow up." We went back to the desolate house, and gathered flowers from the plants and creepers which had belonged to us for six years, and amongst which the children had grown up. I reminded myself that even if we had not left Rome, we should not have been able to remain more than a few days longer in this unequalled abode, and could not have saved it from destruction. Still, it was with heavy hearts, hardly restraining our tears, and but little consoled by the parting greetings which my boy gave to the different buildings we passed, that we returned to our present house. Do not let this make you think Marcus too sensitive, dearest Dora; nothing can be farther from the truth. For God's sake, do not fancy him affected, or

acting a part; everything comes from his heart. But the ruins, and the city, with its neighbourhood, form his world. Do not either take me for sentimental, because it seemed to me as though I were parting from a friend when I stood before the statue of Marcus Aurelius, as the countenance was lit up and animated by the brightest rays of the evening sun. I feel very depressed. I leave this place with sorrow, because I know that I leave many true advantages behind me which cannot be replaced, and do not know what awaits me in my own country, whither I return as a stranger, and may probably have a bitter life before me. . . . . Farewell; a long and gloomy period to us both lies behind me, and seems now but a short dark night. May God bless you; may He give Gretchen health, may He preserve and develope the dear children! May He give me energy and wisdom to make use of the evening of my life! . . . .

CCXCIX.

TO THE COUNT DE SERRE.

FLORENCE, 22*nd May*, 1823.

MY MOST REVERED FRIEND,

I shall put numbers to my letters, that you may know and inform me whether, and when, any of them are suppressed. I beg you to do the same. . . . .

We have again been delighted with the waterfall of Terni, and admired Assisi for the first time. I think you did not see this town of your great saint, and the noble buildings called into existence by the influence of a great and holy poor man on an age susceptible to such influence. Pray do not choose any other route, on your return, than that which will conduct you to Terni and Assisi. Near Narni you will see some grand scenery, and if you can spare half an hour, visit the Bridge of Augustus, one of the greatest Roman works; in Umbria, you will be delighted with the excellence of the husbandry. At Arezzo, I recommend the Cathedral to your attention, for the sake of its extraordinarily beautiful

painted glass. When you come to the Lake of Thrasimenus, picture to yourself (what no historian mentions in this way, but is, notwithstanding, certainly true) that Hannibal, when the Romans were awaiting him near Rimini, on the only high road then opened—that which passed through Rimini and Foligno—forced his way from Lucca into Etruria, through the lower valley of the Arno, then a morass; and, while the Roman army hastened in terror through the most difficult passes of the Apennines towards Arezzo in order to gain the high road to Rome, he turned to the right, and, passing by Cortona, marched on Chiusi along the *western* bank of the lake; the Romans then advanced along the high road by forced marches towards Perugia; but Hannibal faced round, and took the defile of Passignano, just as Davoust placed himself in our rear at Kösen, on the unhappy 14th of October. Hannibal, however, extended his right wing so far along the heights, that he engaged the heads of the Roman columns in the defile, at the same time that he pushed back their whole line towards the lake.

I do not know whether the unfortunate General Vaudoncourt—in whom I fancy your country has had no slight loss—has taken this view; no previous writer has; and that is why I write this to you against your journey home. Vaudoncourt's work, though printed at Milan, was not to be got at Rome! I expect that one of Buonaparte's generals will have perceived, what the scholars have not dreamt of, that Hannibal's course before the battle of Trevia, was exactly that of Buonaparte before Marengo; namely, that he crossed the Po below Piacenza, and cut the Roman army off from the road to Rome; the Po and the fortresses were behind him; therefore, utter destruction was his doom if he were beaten; but he knew that he should be victorious.

Here in Tuscany, the traveller is gladdened by the general aspect of prosperity and cheerfulness; the people appear to be in exactly the condition most agreeable to their true mode of life and natural feelings. Their moral superiority to the Romans strikes you immediately, still more so their piety, from its

contrast to the total absence of it in Rome. You must not take it ill of us Protestants, if, after seven years' residence in Rome (though the people there often go to church every day), we regard this virtue as quite extinct among the Italians, because it is absolutely so in the Papal city. We were much edified here on Whit Tuesday by the real devotion of an immense multitude. It is, I think, easy to explain why it should be precisely at Rome that religious observances are now simply a wearisome task-work.

To him, however, who knows the history of Florence, it is painful to feel how insignificant are the descendants of great forefathers, and how, even the monuments themselves would decay and be utterly demolished, if most of them were not built as if for eternity. Since we were here seven years ago, the façades of several old palaces have been polished up with the chisel and whitewashed! The hotel at which we are staying, and which I highly recommend to you (Madame Hubert, in the Borgo Santi Apostoli), was the palace of the family Acciaiuoli, whose lion carved in stone is still to be seen over the doors: this family, now almost extinct, numbered, from the thirteenth century onwards, great men of every kind among its members. They are everywhere destroying the old decorations of the houses, removing the pictures, and, instead of leaving the walls covered with paintings, among which there are always some masterpieces, having them daubed over with common landscapes by decoration painters. One family, Orlandini, did so with their villa quite lately, and gave the decorators paintings by way of payment, among which, there was a portrait from *Raphael's hand,* which some favourite of fortune bought of the equally ignorant house-painter for 300 scudi. This is the talk among the amateurs. An intelligent German, who has lived here for a considerable time, says, that since he has been here, thirteen whole galleries have been sold, without including the small collections. . . . .

Literature and science seem to have reached their lowest ebb. During the seventeenth century, the Florentines still lived in the evening twilight of their brilliant day; they were still full of

real love for the old time, the material creations of which, as well as all civil forms which did not affect the sovereignty, yet existed, and made that time quite present to them; they regarded themselves as citizens of the first city of Europe. During the former half of the eighteenth century, the country sank into poverty, and the inhabitants lost their acuteness and activity of mind; then followed a wise government, which restored prosperity to the country, but abrogated all the long-descended forms as trammels, and did not, like the Medicean, link itself on to the old times. The city began to understand that it was only a small part of Europe; a literary sect strove against the evidence of this, and, without a spark of the intellect of the old Florentines, wanted to retain the position of their heirs, and rejected everything that had not passed away; they could see no value in anything unless it had ceased to exist. It seems to me, that there are ultras in every branch of human affairs, and in every age, when a discord arises between the old and the new. Another party, to which all the men of the world attached themselves, seized on the ridiculous side of the former, became cosmopolitan, and found a source of satisfaction in the common welfare of Europe, while evading the obligation of accomplishing anything themselves. Thus everything has gone to decay.

The aforesaid literary aristocracy has at last become quite democratic, and is just now engaged in collecting from the mouths of the porters and maidservants, as the possessors of the treasures of the old language, the idioms which they desire to impose upon the writers of Italy. Does not this union between *that* aristocracy which only consists in pretensions, and the proletarians from whom alone it has nothing to fear, exist also in political history? I have found it in that of Rome.

During the few days that we were in Rome, it was impossible to read through the documents laid before Parliament. Very likely they will have ceased to be topics of conversation by the time that I shall have leisure to read them in any place where they can be procured, and my

hasty survey of the debates was enough to make me think, like you, that Canning is playing a miserable part; the assumptions, on the strength of which he went to such rash lengths in his expressions at the opening of Parliament, have not been confirmed, and therefore, his system has been altered. I am further certain, that even the English Cabinet would have seen no occurrence so unwillingly as the introduction of guarantees by France; from this fear they are, I should think, quite delivered. The declaration of the Junta might, however, have very hazardous consequences, or on the other hand, very favourable ones, if they adroitly agreed to recognise the interest due on the English demands, which they must do some time, and made it payable.

The course of the military movements in Spain, so far, is exactly what might be expected in such a state of decay and moral degradation. I know, indeed, nothing since the head-quarters were fixed in Burgos. The mention of fevers gave me anxiety, and I feel grieved that up to this time, as far as we can see, none but the clergy and the proletarians have come forward actively in favour of the counter-revolution; there is no mention of the higher classes of the laity. Thus appearances seem to point towards a repetition of the system which was so unfortunately adopted at Naples after 1799. After all, such a decay as that by which Spain falls to pieces at the first blow, is a terrible sight! So rotten has Europe become through revolution! The aspect of this is so threatening for us all, that one cannot really abandon oneself to exultation at the exposure of the vaunts of the Liberals. The disease must constantly gain ground.

I can well conceive that the population of France must be increasing at an enormous rate, as ours with 12,000,000 under so much less favourable circumstances, is increasing at the rate of more than 150,000 a year. We are all weighed down by the impossibility of emigration on a large scale. However, we shall infallibly be one day visited by fearful pestilences, which will again produce a receding tide in the number of human beings, as in the fourteenth century; when, at all events, the greater part of Italy and Germany

were much more thickly peopled than they are even now.

CCC.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

ST. GALL, 16*th June*, 1823.

. . . . We have found the Tyrolese as warm-hearted and loveable as on our journey hither; I think there can be no doubt that the true, noble part of the German character has nowhere been so distinctly preserved as among this simple primitive people. We found now, as before, the most sincere desire to oblige. At Innspruck, I made the acquaintance of a merchant, who was a member of the municipal administration, and was in all respects what one could wish a citizen to be. These people scarcely read even the meagre journal that appears in their country; they think of nothing but their immediate calling and their duties; and the few who have heard a vague rumour that there is such a thing as liberalism in the world, are quite anti-liberal. As regards their own condition, they would strongly wish that most things should remain in the old track; but they resign themselves quietly and cheerfully to what cannot be helped, and alleviate the pressure of the times by frugality and contentedness. The communes are now obliged to redeem the heavy communal debts by very high rates; they set themselves manfully to the work, and rejoice that they can look forward to an end of it. The peculiar Tyrolese character, cast of features, and costume, do not extend quite to the Arlberg. Before you reach the latter, you meet with that curious mode of building houses entirely of wood, which is common in Switzerland. The language, too, gradually changes into the Swabian Swiss. The race is quite different from the Tyrolese, namely, Swabian; while the latter are Bavarians. The Tyrolese have no gardens and no bee-hives, while both are common in the Vorarlberg and among the Swabian Swiss. . . .

The little town of Rheinek is old-fashioned and extremely cheerful-looking; else the general aspect of Switzerland betrays a surprising amount of poverty, even among the

inhabitants of the beautiful districts I have described,* and their dwellings, quite unlike the villages in the Vorarlberg, which, nevertheless, unquestionably pay much higher taxes. But Switzerland is overpeopled beyond endurance, and this evil is constantly increasing; a man, whose word may be trusted, says, that in the Canton of Appenzell, out of five families, scarcely one has a house of its own and a plot of ground. The appearance of the children is by no means so blooming as in the Vorarlberg and the Tyrol; neither do the grown people look so robust or so cheerful. While, in the Tyrol, a stranger is not charged more than a native, and the travelling journeymen, for instance, will not ask you for anything, or if they do, it is incredibly little, and demanded with embarrassment, it is notorious how the Swiss cheat travellers, and try to suck the very blood out of them. The Tyrolese seem staunch Catholics; but their superabundant belief is only a light outer garment, which does not conceal the essence of true piety. It is no obtusely superstitious people that affix such proverbs to their houses as the following, which I have recollected :—

"We build us houses large and strong,
Where we're but guests, nor tarry long,
Careless a mansion to secure,
Which might for ever-more endure."

"This house is mine, and yet not mine;
If thou com'st next it is not thine,
And if a third should take our place,
He'll still be in the self-same case;
The fourth too, men will bear away
Whose is the house then, can you say"

"He who will build beside the way,
Must little care what people say;
But if he show his skill and art,
His work itself will take his part." †

* * * *

* A thick forest of fruit-trees, among which the houses were scattered separately at some distance from the road.

† In the original :—

"Wir bauen Haüser gross und fest,
Darin wir nur seyn fremde Gäst :

CCCI.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

St. Gall, 30*th June*, 1823.

"Your consolatory letter, my revered and beloved friend, reached us a few hours after I had taken mine to the post. We have thanked God from our hearts that he has averted the peril that threatened you so fearfully. May He secure to you the possession of the sweet child by bracing her feeble powers, and grant you and yours the joy of living blessings!

I thank you heartily for having calmed our anxieties; still worse, and apparently later tidings, than those contained in your first letter, had reached us from Rome, so that we had scarcely any hope left. Besides, for a long time past, I have ceased to possess the faculty of hope, strictly speaking. I thank you with equal warmth for all the rest of your letter.

We are not able as yet to say positively how long we shall remain here; I cannot exactly calculate how long it will take me to get through the work that the library presents. The interesting discoveries I have made here, are fragments of a panegyric in prose, and another in verse, on the great Aetius, who defeated Attila at Chalons. Scarcely any contemporary writings have been preserved from this period, which immediately preceded the fall of the Western Empire, and our knowledge of it is extremely scanty; on this account, these

Und da wir sollen ewig seyn
Da bauen wir gar wenig ein."

" Das Haus ist mein, und doch nicht mein.
Der nach mir kommt, ist auch nicht sein;
Und wird's dem Dritten übergeben,
So wird's ihm eben so ergehen.
Den Vierten trägt man auch hinaus;
Ei, sagt mir doch! wesz ist das Haus?"

" Wer da bauet an der Gassen,
Der muss die Leute reden lassen.
Doch hat er seine Kunst erprobt,
Alsdann das Werk den Meister lobt."

relics possess great interest, and also because they bring to light many facts that were previously quite unknown. They have also a still stronger interest for me, because they establish a circumstance of which I had long been certain, and had said so, but found few disposed to believe me; namely, that in this horrible fifth century there was much intellect, much more than in the preceding one. During the long cheerless apathy of the Roman Empire, all intellect had died out; people did not trouble themselves about the border war that was attended with no danger, and were only occupied with the lowest sensual enjoyments. The irruption of the Barbarians placed the existence of each individual at stake; through sheer self-love men learned that they had a fatherland. Isolated great men appeared, and awakened genuine admiration; these panegyrics, in prose and verse, have been inspired by such sentiments. Religion filled men's hearts and thoughts; and the death-struggle of the old religion (of which my fragments contain an unexpected example), at least fired the imagination. Another interesting discovery, of quite a different kind, is some leaves, written at the latest in the sixth century, belonging to a liturgy much earlier than any of those extant; morning devotions of a very ancient date, that seem to belong to the *Stationes*, referred to at the beginning of the third century,—extremely simple and venerable prayers. I am copying them for a good and learned monk, as a token of gratitude for his friendship; he cannot read the defaced writing, but he will be able to edit them with much more knowledge of the subject than I. Besides, these I have a Latin Grammarian to copy out, who adds several words, not occurring elsewhere, to our stock of pure Latinity. This is a tedious job, and I wish some one else were here to do it; however, there is no one else here.

From hence we go to Zürich, where I also intend to look at the MSS., and shall perhaps find something. I wonder if our stay there will be more agreeable than here? I do not believe it will, except that the Lake of Zürich affords a very different prospect from the uninteresting valley in which this town is situated, and the view we have from the heights

here, where the shapeless outlines of the nearer and remoter mountains appear to form but one range. The cheerless part of the business lies in the dispositions of the people. The Revolution has dispelled all illusions; it was the fruit of the tree of knowledge that brought death in the day in which it was eaten.

For here, everything dates from 1803 and 1814. Men between thirty and forty years of age, who belong to the government, have not an idea what the constitution was before 1798. The dissatisfaction and discomfort which are everywhere blighting all happiness, exist here, quite as much as in those monarchies which are the farthest removed from fancied perfection,—but no one seems to ask the reason of it. Is it not clear, however, that any constitution must produce miserable results, which calls far too great a number from the midst of absolute mediocrity, to power and a conspicuous station? In this new canton, numbering about 130,000 souls, among whom the inhabitants of the little capital (amounting to 8000) hold the same relation as those of any metropolis to the provincials, nine individuals are to be found for the Little Council and the government; then further, the judges of a Court of Appeal, 150 deputies for the Legislative Council, a dozen under-prefects, more than forty mayors, a dozen courts of justice, besides municipalities, &c. Civil and criminal codes are formed, laws compiled, innumerable resolutions and enactments passed. Such a system can inspire no respect.

. . . . The ferment in Ireland is, perhaps, the most unmistakeable symptom of the sickness that has spread through the whole *body* of *society* in Europe, from which the spirit of civil union has more or less taken its departure. Sooner or later the constitution will have to be annulled in Ireland.

The revolution in Chili is very unfortunate. The wisdom of the dictator, O'Higgins, was incontestibly proved by the instructions he gave to the envoy whom he dispatched to Rome. I should rather look upon the recovery of Spanish America as easy than impossible, if your government can

venture to afford assistance to Spain. But that would, perhaps, be too dangerous a step. . . . .

CCCII.

FRANKFORT, 17*th August*, 1823.

. . . . . I thank you with my whole heart for your faithful and wise counsel about our future: but you are quite wrong in apologising for it. I will write you a full answer as soon as we have found a place where I can have a room besides the nursery to write in. We hope for this at Bonn, where we shall arrive in four or five days from now.

Up to this time, Heidelberg is the only place where I have enjoyed myself since we left the Tyrol. No doubt you know the town; it is impossible for an inland place to be more finely situated. I could not tear myself away from it, and remained there day after day. I saw again there a friend of my youth. I had looked forward with some dread to the meeting, because he has been involved in an acrimonious literary contest with Savigny, who is my nearest and dearest friend; and also because thirty years ago he was a fanatical admirer of the Revolution. I found that his misunderstanding with Savigny had terminated reasonably, and that his views of the world were as sensible as possible: such conversions are, however, rare among us. But there is a feud between him and an aged man, of great celebrity in our literature, Voss, the translator of Homer, with whom I have remained on terms of friendship from my childhood up, in spite of a thousand circumstances calculated to disturb it, and upon whom I cannot turn my back, now that he is in his seventy-second year; and it is impossible to remain neutral between them, else we should probably have decided on stopping at Heidelberg.

My noble friend, since you take so much interest in the account of my journey, I have still much to tell you; and this shall be my first employment at Bonn, as afterwards you will be my Muse of history. I have seen and expe-

rienced some remarkable things, of which I will certainly send you an account by post.

Please God, the Spanish war is approaching its termination; and yet I see no other end for it than absolute despotism on the whole, with extensive provincial privileges. I rejoice in your successes; this is clear, that success has been never less abused than by your noble prince and your army. But shall I not also tell you that now, since we have become so closely bound together, I sympathise in all that relates to your fatherland, as if it concerned myself, while I had already regarded it with very different feelings from my former ones, ever since you had appeared as a pure light in the firmament of your political world; that is, ever since the advent of freedom in connexion with royalty, and your own appearance on the political stage?

We are on our way now to visit Savigny, while he is at a watering-place. I wish, both for his sake and yours, that you knew each other. My wife unites with me in best greetings to yourself, your wife, and the dear children; Marcus keeps both parents and children in his faithful heart. It is a pity that the interruptions of the journey encourage his indolence. . . . .

CCCIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

FRANKFORT, 18*th August*, 1823.

. . . . The stream* was full and the spectacle grand; still the rocks between which it forces its way, have an uncouth shape, and one should visit the place before one goes to Italy, not after one has seen the purely beautiful forms of the Velino and the Arno at Tivoli. The Swiss mountains in general have a painfully rude and mis-shapen aspect, from their jagged, quite inharmonic forms: the Tyrolese mountains are much more beautiful, and so are the mountains near Heidelberg, which are really not inferior to the graceful

* The falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen.

outlines of the most beautiful Italian mountains; they only want the colouring and the sky. . . . .

The promised beauties of the valley of the Neckar did not show themselves till about a [German] mile before Heidelberg, when indeed they far exceeded my expectation, and would have exceeded it, even if everything since we left the Tyrol had not been so far below my conceptions. The scene was so lovely that I left the carriage with Marcus, and went on foot to the town. It was evening, and we did not visit our acquaintance till the next morning; Thibaut was gone into the country, his wife at church. We set off, not without some uneasiness, on the long walk to Voss's Garden. His reception was not cordial, and not unfriendly in its shy way; painful subjects were not touched upon, and I could soon see my way so as to avoid them. On subsequent occasions Voss often alluded to his position towards Thibaut, but never so directly as to make it unavoidable for me to understand him, and reply to him. Not till the fourth day did he speak of his attack upon Stolberg, when he brought me his last publication,* not his first. I warded off all explanation, and it went no further. To my great astonishment he judges very correctly with respect to the rest of the Wessenbergians.† He is not disinclined to believe that the youth are led astray by their instructors, because philology has been very badly treated by the Liberals. Any one who has watched the course of history, as I have done, during the last seven years, in Western and Southern Europe, must be roused to indignation by the lies of the Neckar Journal, which guides public opinion here. But the most exasperating thing is the Napoleonism of South Germany.

Voss did not look in the least aged since 1803; he is perfectly unchanged in body and mind; his wife is weak and infirm. Fearing that we might probably find it difficult to

* "Wie F. L. Stolberg unfrei geworden ist.

† Wessenberg was a liberal Catholic ecclesiastic, who wished for a reform in the Catholic Church, and had many followers in Germany. Niebuhr believed him to be a well-intentioned, but superficial man, quite unfit to play the part of a reformer.

get on with him, we only expressed the intention of remaining a single day. But as everything seemed likely to go on more smoothly than we could have expected, and the neighbourhood was more beautiful than we could hope to see it again, we lingered day after day, and did not leave till Friday, instead of Monday. We divided all this time between the Vosses and the Thibauts. I have found Thibaut very unprejudiced, and very sound in his views upon all general subjects; friendly, and open. His children are admirably brought up, and the eldest boy has a singularly noble and amiable disposition. Our children were as if in heaven in his exquisitely beautiful garden, and their loveliness won all hearts; Marcus was quite admired for his ability and acuteness. One evening the children were there alone, and Marcus delighted everybody by the sharpness of his answers, combined with his perfectly childlike manners.

I have made the acquaintance of one truly excellent man there, the historian Schlosser (from Jever). This I see, that my History has now acquired an authority which no attacks can shake. I staid a day at Darmstadt, and looked through the MSS. which contain nothing of consequence. We are staying a day and a half here in Frankfort, to have the opportunity of writing some letters in a hotel where we are not packed quite so closely together. I have only one old acquaintance here, for whom a few hours will suffice; in those, however, I shall gain much information from him. The ambassadors I mean to ignore. . . . .

CHAPTER XI.

NIEBUHR'S RESIDENCE IN BONN, FROM AUGUST, 1823, TO JANUARY, 1831.

1823, 1824.

NIEBUHR had scarcely arrived in Bonn when Steinacker's attack on him in his edition of Cicero "De Republicâ," fell into his hands, which wounded him more deeply than it probably would have done at another time, because it embittered his return to his own country. It gave rise to two pamphlets in his own defence on Niebuhr's part. For himself, the controversy had however one favourable result; for while engaged in investigating the points in dispute, he suddenly perceived the solution of a difficulty which had been the chief cause of his delay in continuing the History of Rome. This discovery decided him to resume the work, which had been so long laid aside, and he received it as a happy omen that the day on which he formed this resolution was the anniversary of his betrothal with his first wife, to whom he had promised on her death bed that he would finish his great work.

In September, 1823, he paid a visit to M. Von Stein

at Nassau, but postponed his intended journey to Berlin on account of the absence of the Crown Prince. On his return, he set to work on his Roman History, at which he laboured with such assiduity, that he completed the half of the third volume in the course of the winter, except its final revision. Indisposition afterwards interrupted his studies. He then began to revise the two former volumes for a second edition (the first being out of print), in which he wished to embody the results of his maturer researches. He would have preferred to finish the sketch of the third volume at once, but the alterations necessary in the two earlier volumes occupied him so deeply that they withdrew his thoughts from the later portion.

His studies were again interrupted in the spring by his wife's confinement with a second son, and afterwards by his journey to Berlin, before which, however, he found time to prepare a new edition of Merobaudes for publication.

In May, 1824, he went to Berlin, visiting M. Von Stein on his way. There he presented himself to the King, saw the Crown Prince, with whom he renewed his former friendship, and greatly enjoyed the meeting with his friends. But his happiness was soon disturbed by tidings from home: all his four younger children were taken ill in succession, and the infant died on the 4th of June, after severe suffering. Niebuhr, however, experienced at this time a circumstance which often occurs in human life,—that a greater calamity helps to lift us above smaller evils, and quickens our sense

of the blessings still left to us. The death of the child raised him above other crosses and cares, and turned his thoughts to that which he still possessed but might also lose. The recollection of the advantages he had enjoyed in Rome, and the uncertainty which hung over his future prospects, had hitherto frequently exercised a very depressing influence on him. He now resolved to request a definitive release from his duties as ambassador, and, after repeated applications, at length obtained it, with a provisional salary equal in amount to that which he had received before he left Berlin. He thus at last obtained leisure to devote himself to the studies which he had always regarded as his true vocation. He had now decided to settle in Bonn, but the course of his employments was interrupted by a summons to Berlin, to attend the sittings of the Council of State during the ensuing winter. He therefore returned to Berlin towards the end of November, and spent the winter principally in working with two Commissions, appointed by the Council of State to deliberate on the erection of a National Bank, and the tenure of land among the Westphalian peasantry.

The death of De Serre, in the autumn of 1824, affected him deeply. Madame de Serre wished that he should write her husband's life, and invited him to come to Paris in order to examine the documents which she could not send him. It was Niebuhr's full intention to raise this monument to the memory of his friend, but various circumstances hindered his visit to France, and at length his own sudden death frustrated the design.

Letters from September, 1823, *to May*, 1825.

CCCIV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, 10*th September*, 1823.

I get constantly more and more ill at ease the longer this existence without a present and a future continues; all that comes under my notice makes an unfavourable impression on me. Wherever you go, you hear nothing but dissensions and quarrels, without being able to sympathise with any party. The feuds between the various factions and *nuances* among the Catholics for instance, naturally strike me in this way, as also their discussions with the Protestants. The people know that I understand the points in question, and am logically fair. I know very well too, what is logical, just, and true; but in such disputes I cannot take any kind of interest. It is the same with everything. Literature seems to me as good as dead, the moral condition of the nation mournful, according to the accounts I hear from persons of the most opposite tendencies, some of whom are far from finding offensiveness offensive. Frivolity, a striving after ease and leisure, and the want of a proper sense of duty pervade the whole of society. In these pursuits our nation cuts a very awkward figure, as Jacobi prophesied more than forty years ago.

I find myself greeted here with a malicious and rancorous literary attack, by people whose waters I never thought to trouble. And so this then is my reception to the bosom of my fatherland!

We must give up our journey to Paris; there are too many difficulties in the way. I shall, therefore, leave for Berlin the day after to-morrow, and visit M. Von Stein in my way thither; he has repeatedly invited me, and loss of time and extra distance must not be taken into the account in visiting a man so far advanced in years.

. . . . Brandis has received us with his old heartiness

and warmth. Another acquaintance of ours is a Catholic Professor of Theology, who staid for some time in our house at Rome—Dr. Scholz—as thoroughly good a man as Brandis. A Protestant theologian, named Nitzsch, seems a man of extremely distinguished talent.

CCCV.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

BONN, *8th October*, 1823.

. . . . Such an affront as the pamphlet I have alluded to could not be left unnoticed in the face of our reading (and only reading) nation; I began an answer to it, and five times without success. A last attempt pleased me better, though it is by no means what I could have produced in the best years of my youth. But while engaged on it, a light unexpectedly broke in upon my mind, illustrating a point in the Roman history, of whose elucidation I had despaired for twelve years. This consoled me, and inspired me with fresh vigour. It happened that this light related to the great change in the *comitia*, as regards *the electoral law*, and I now gained a complete insight into its import, which I had previously misunderstood to a great extent, as most others have done entirely; namely, I saw that its tendency was to bring the elections under the influence of the landed proprietors and hereditary citizens, without excluding the trades and the citizens not possessing an ancestry. You were constantly in my mind while I was writing; and my heart beat, when I discovered who the great Roman was, who once effected what you too have accomplished; and as a reward for his work, was surnamed Maximus by his nation, a title which five consulates and triumphs had not been sufficient to procure for him.

It so happened that I gained this new light on the anniversary of my betrothal to my late wife, whose last wish was that I should finish my History; and the coincidence kindled my courage to undertake the continuation which had been so long delayed. Thus my life is no longer without a

vocation, and my melancholy, therefore, is vanquished. Do you know what has made me recognise most clearly all that you are to me? That in my dejection, I longed inexpressibly to see you, and no less when serenity was restored to my overclouded mind. Do not understand me as setting any value upon the little essay that you are expecting and shall have; the execution of the great work will not interfere with it. . . . .

The enclosed is the first of a series of communications respecting the state of Germany, the continuation of which you shall receive from time to time.* God bless you and yours, my only late-found friend! May He keep and defend you! My wife and children unite with me in hearty love to you and your dear family.

CCCVI.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, 29*th October*, 1823.

. . . . I have now worked through a very difficult chapter in the History. I have no lack of ideas, but I feel that I have grown old and drier than I should be under other circumstances; outward things disturb me, even the dear interruptions caused by the children. It is but too certain that there is a perfection in authorship unattainable, except where the author has no children, or acts as if he had none; which God forbid! Another great difficulty arises from the absence of my own library.

We have made an excursion to Cologne, which has not disappointed my expectations, but in many respects exceeded them; although the city is ugly, and has been despoiled of most of its works of art. The prebends, who were never reduced to actual want, sold many of the treasures during their emigration, and even a part of the golden shrine that contains the pretended relics of the Three Holy Kings—the jewels as well as the gold plate. A mere accident saved the

* The paper alluded to is on the political condition of Switzerland, and is published in the Lebensnachrichten, vol. iii. p. 423.

greater part of them from destruction. Such was the conduct of the men who made an outcry about sacrilege, because they had been driven, it must be confessed very unjustly, from their benefices!

It is cheering to see the universal prosperity in the Prussian Rhenish provinces, which proves that the government has at least the merit of pressing very lightly on the people. You see improvements making in all directions, and fresh land brought under tillage wherever it is capable of it. I hear that this is particularly the case along the Moselle, where the wines have reached a higher price than has ever been known before.

The population of Cologne has increased by 8000; for centuries houses have been pulled down; now new ones are building, and it is said that rents have risen to double their former amount. The same change is taking place to a still greater extent here, at Düsseldorf, at Coblentz, and at every town you hear of.

But for the difference of religion, the people would soon be reconciled to their new rulers, because they are really well off; but unhappily the Rhenish Catholics are either, on the one hand, free-thinkers and Jacobins, or, on the other, bigots, who can feel no attachment to a heretical sovereign.

The government really makes incredible efforts for public instruction, and quite without regard to expense; but the priests look upon all these institutions with jealousy and mistrust, although the government, which committed some errors at first, now wisely avoids everything which could really give them occasion for uneasiness.

If you compare the state of these provinces with the aspect of things in Baden, Würtemberg, Darmstadt, where impoverishment and misery everywhere betray themselves, you feel how much better off the people are *under present circumstances* in great States than in small ones. Moreover, you are often reminded how much fewer blunders are made in a large State than in a small one; because, as soon as you go beyond the limits of a city, the problem of the government is always the same; and supposing, in both cases, the

same want of skill in the choice of competent persons, yet in small States the number of such is necessarily so much smaller, and there is less chance of their appointment by a fortunate accident.

The Catholic religion, such as it is in these parts, is called, even by orthodox Catholics, benighted heathenism. For example, on processions to a place in this neighbourhood, a fellow dances on a tight rope, with a banner in his hand, to the sound of Turkish music, as soon as the Litany is over. These absurd exhibitions were forbidden under the French rule; they have been allowed to creep into use again by the mildness of our government, and I myself, were I in authority, should fear to act tyrannically in forbidding them. The clergy is constantly sinking into deeper ignorance; the Vicar-General promotes fellows who have been to no school whatever, and refuses to receive those who have studied at the University. What is to become of the Catholic religion God knows! It *may* re-establish itself in *the same way* that it did after the suppression of the Reformation, and then the ignorance prevailing in the Catholic countries of Germany will become still denser. But this proves, above all things, how powerless Protestantism is now-a-days.

Events in Spain are turning out, step for step, just as I expected; among other things, the fall and banishment of the noblest men, such as the Marquis de las Amarillas, who, after having in vain endeavoured to induce the King to give guarantees against the renewal of his tyranny, remained in the palace on the night of the 7th of July, in order to die with the royal family, if a 10th of August followed; not to speak of the proscription of the noble-hearted Valdes, who did indeed pursue a phantom in his attachment to the Constitution, but whose whole conduct had been without a spot for four years, and who had prevented the shedding of blood after the 7th of July, at the peril of his own life. I have foreseen all this, and yet my wishes have been on the side of the result which has actually ensued. We have witnessed a strange issue of affairs, which must force us to look with profound contempt upon our age; it has been for years impossible to hope for

a happy issue, *because the revolutionists* have rendered that out of the question. Of the two extreme results, the actual seems to me the preferable one, though a shocking abuse will be made of it everywhere. As a member of the middle class, for the sake of my son, the consolidation of a decaying aristocracy is a subject of regret; but with us, in Germany, it can never become so loathsome as Liberalism. The burning fever of the Revolution has spent itself, like a pestilence that at last vanishes spontaneously. A very unintellectual period will come now, but we shall have repose, and be able to return to the quiet life of our grandfathers, who were not, however, threatened like ourselves with subjugation by barbarians.

I recognise and duly estimate the force of your reasons, dear Dora, against resigning my post at Rome; but you cannot understand how impossible it would be to take Gretchen back there, since her health is certainly much better in the air of Germany, and, above all, she has so great a dislike to the life we led in Italy. . . . .

CCCVII.

BONN, 11*th December*, 1823.

. . . . I turn to answer one part of your letter. It must certainly be owing to some carelessness in expressing myself, that you could suppose I meant to say anything to the disadvantage of the Germans as compared with the Italians. God forbid! What I mean is, that I ought to have an adequate compensation for what I give up in point of health and comfort, and the variety of interesting objects of contemplation, if I am not to feel that I have lost by the exchange. The case is different with any one who has retained his youthful connexions in Germany. I come back to a world in which the opposing parties are impelled and guided by vague sentiments and heated passions, and all alike have adopted their opinions on the authority of newspapers, periodicals, and the Conversations-Lexicon; and in these authorities they put such faith, that they anathematise

every one who has more insight than themselves. I would just as soon talk about religion with a bigoted Catholic peasant, as converse with such people about the weightiest concerns of the world. Such wisdom I may dare to despise, when three men, of three such different nations, and each of them the first, or among the first men of their own nation, as M. Von Stein, M. de Serre, and Lord Colchester, give me credit for a profound knowledge of the material and intellectual condition of the leading states of Europe, ask me for my opinion, and take my verdict on matters as an authority, whilst in these trivial circles every one is wiser than I.

Although I grant you that the state of affairs in Germany might be much more cheering, if the governments were better, you must also concede to me that these governments are a part of the nation; so much so that the difficulty would not be so much to find one man with right views, but how such a one would form a ministry; and supposing he accomplished this, where he would find his subordinate officials, and members of the provincial governments. There is the great difficulty. It is easy to say that you must set bounds to arbitrary power by Chambers and municipalities; I say so too, for it is true; only no effectual assistance is to be hoped from them. For instance, I have always opposed the system of regulating public instruction throughout the monarchy by the central government, and wished that the schools should again, as formerly, be placed under the superintendence of the clergy and local authorities. But then we are met by examples which show how much worse things are where this is the case; not only here, where the Catholic priests aim at excluding the laity of their own church from the schools, or in Coblentz, where men who wore the red cap during the Revolution, and carried the goddess of Reason about, having now turned devotees, though remaining as arrant Jacobins as ever in politics, are straining every nerve to displace or worry to death the upright, learned *Catholic* Director of the Gymnasium,—but even in Berlin itself, where the civic authorities, and very respectable men

amongst them, openly avow the wish (and actively exert themselves to further it in the Gymnasium which is under their jurisdiction) to depress the study of philology, and to make instruction in the so-called useful branches of knowledge predominant. The nobility cherish oligarchical pretensions, and yet will on no account consent to strengthen the basis of their order; our order does not know what it wants. Had the men in whose hands the decision lay, attempted to erect a constitution among us in 1816, everything would have gone to pieces by now. Our gymnastic heroes would have managed no better. I have never ceased to mourn over the persecutions which were set on foot at that time; but if a terrible Fate has decreed that these severities should have been committed, or that we should have continued on the path we were then treading, and suffered the whole youth of the country to be turned into madmen and savages, at all events the least of two bitter evils has befallen us. What fellows they were who then excited universal sympathy as martyrs! Very many of them have veered round to the opposite extreme. The better members of this sect had learnt nothing, and made at least as extravagant claims to be supported by the State, as you could find among any young scions of nobility. I can nowhere see solid ground; and truly I am not alone in my dark forebodings. With the most irreproachable intentions, and sincerely thinking to benefit the agricultural population, they are ruining the whole peasant class by giving them power to sell, to cut up, and to mortgage their land; and everything is tending in the same direction. The lowest and most superficial views have become universally prevalent; and whether ministries or Chambers have to decide upon measures, you obtain the same results. Men are not ill-intentioned; but in all the German states that are not stationary, the tendency of the legislation is, according to the saying of a distinguished man, to bring our nation to the level of the Italians: in the towns, half-skilled artisans and petty tradesmen; in the country, miserable tenants at will, and day labourers. With an agricultural population like that of Wurtemberg, can you ask for freedom?

Believe me, dearest Dora, these are not prejudices. I have studied the history of the legislation of many nations, through a series of centuries, and hence I know where we are standing, and whither we are going. In our nation there are men as excellent, both in mind and heart, as are to be found anywhere, and such as many nations, the Italians for instance, do not possess at all, or very rarely. Here is Brandis, Nitzsch (an extraordinary man), and several others among the professors in Bonn, are worthy of all honour. One of the most distinguished, whom I should probably never have heard of, in his retired corner, if he had not sent me some essays through M. Von Stein, is a Dr. Schulze, in Hamm, unquestionably a real historical genius, and moreover an admirable writer: so too I became acquainted with Pertz and Bluhme when in Rome. But sound sense and sound morality are not general among us, as they were with our forefathers. In the pettiest towns there are billiards and clubs, and family life exists no longer. The Revolution is vanquished, and whoever now fears revolts, sees phantoms; but as to what will come next, I have no presentiment of good.

M. Von Stein has invited us all warmly and repeatedly to his house. At this time of year it is impossible to take all the children; but I shall go myself alone to Nassau for two or three days. He warns us touchingly to remember his age, and that if we do not see each other as often as possible our meeting may soon become impossible for ever. He has become quite gentle, and his behaviour towards me has a sort of fatherly tenderness. I believe that he has much to bear. . . . .

CCCVIII.

BONN, *6th January*, 1824.

Marcus has had a violent attack of influenza. The child was obliged to keep his bed two days: I remarked, altogether, that the physician here had returned to the old precautionary measures. This will therefore probably be the present fashion in medicine, with which I am very well satisfied if it

only lasts. That medical art consists in fashion is indeed nothing new: we may thank God when no desperate systems happen to be in vogue. Marcus was very good and amiable during his illness; he is certainly a much better child than I was, though I may have been, perhaps, more easy to educate. Göschen teases him too much with learning hymns by rote. I have no objection at all to learning by rote, particularly as the boy finds a difficulty in it, whilst all his recollections of principles and observations are ineffaceable. I wish, I strive with my whole heart, that he may grow up with the most absolute faith in religion, yet so that his faith may not be an outward adhesion that must fall away from him afterwards, when his reason comes into play, but, that from his earliest years *the way may be prepared* for the union of faith and reason. I should therefore quite approve of hymns, but that the number of those adapted to a child not yet seven years old is so small; for where they can present no idea to his mind, the difficult sentences are a torment to him. To a happy child, hymns deploring the misery of human life are without meaning; so, likewise, to a good child, are those expressing self-accusation and contrition. In all departments of education, it is certainly a main point not to come to anything too early, and that holds good here as well as in learning. I am succeeding admirably in exercising the powers of his mind, by efforts exactly proportioned to them, so that I can say with confidence, that he has not a single thought beyond his age, none that is not quite suitable to a child; and yet he often delights us with the originality of his ideas. I always oblige him to reflect, and to set himself right within his own sphere. It was not departing from it that he asked, during his illness, "in Latin there are already five tenses; but what tense of a verb is that when you want to express that you are on the point of doing something? It cannot be the present tense, but yet it is not the future, is it?" From a boy with a decided taste for grammar, which displays itself in the great ease with which he now learns the forms already familiar to him in reading, such a speech is no more a sign of precocity,

than the discovery of a mathematical proposition was in Pascal, that born mathematician. . . . .

CCCIX.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

BONN, *4th February*, 1824.

. . . . England will, without a doubt, lower her old four per cent. funds during the present session; the amount of this stock is not very large, but this step will prepare the way for a similar operation with the three per cents. next year, by which the national burdens may be very considerably lightened. But, in order to effect this, peace is necessary, and I venture to hope that, after the experiment in Spain, your government has renounced all idea of attempting to recover America. Posterity will pronounce a woe upon those through whom Spanish America was rent away, and could not again be brought into subjection. I, however, do not see in these countries seminaries and models of the democratic republic; but I see that a portion of them will be converted into negro States, like St. Domingo; the rest will be dissolved, and become a prey to the greatest anarchy, unless a dictator arise. It is now too late to prevent this; and it is England that will have the greatest reason to repent her conduct, since North America must immediately obtain the superiority, and she will infallibly lose her West Indian possessions. What a fatal confusion reigns there already! If it is really true that the resolutions of Parliament respecting the treatment of the negroes, have raised a ferment among the latter, it would follow that you must tolerate the greatest atrocities on the part of those who are under your authority, if they are resolved to persevere in their commission, and if their opposition to your reforms would produce still greater calamities. Is not this a much more difficult case of clashing duties than that of the casuists, where it is a question of saving life? The regulations which the parliament has not even commanded, but simply recommended, do not at all affect political rights; have not even a remote

reference to emancipation, but solely to moral enormities, the abolition of which had been fruitlessly recommended by the government in private. In these islands, the white population will be exterminated, if at any time the power of the mother country should be insufficient to suppress a general outbreak; in the Spanish colonies, the white will be merged in the coloured population; in many countries, the Spanish language, which is even now very little spoken by the Creoles, will die out; entirely new nations will arise, but they will be barbarous.

My country will owe me no slight thanks if I have excited your interest in it, my beloved friend. Your remarks about the projected provincial Chambers are full of weight: would to Heaven that you lived among us, and could make them practically influential. You remind me how it was recognised in France, before the Revolution, that it would have been impossible to govern, if the whole kingdom had consisted of provinces each possessing 'Chambers. Has not this principle a still wider application, and is it not always impossible to govern without despotism, where no diversity of rights exists,—rights appertaining to provinces or classes? So, again, there is a period when this diversity cannot be maintained, because it has ceased to exist in practice. It seems to me that we have committed a great error in making the provinces too large. Had the old provinces been left as they were, and not thrown together, a sufficient number of people, of sound understanding and upright character, would have been found in them, who would have managed their domestic affairs unassumingly and well; but in our Westphalia, people assemble from such distant parts that they are strangers to each other, and get upon general topics, because the one knows nothing of the municipal affairs of the other and takes no interest in them; in fact, the very man who best feels where, as we say, the shoe pinches, is frequently outvoted by the rest, if, as is very often the case, the majority of the other counties are not concerned in the question under discussion. But it is the least of my fears that the ministers will prevent the

project from coming into effectual operation at all, by giving the Chambers nothing to deliberate on but trifles. It is worthy of note, how nearly all who have had to do with the scheme, while really anything but liberal themselves, yet secretly believe that none but liberal ideas are sensible; and, from fear of seeming unenlightened, take steps which even popular opinion would not call for, if they would do something better. In all parts of our territory, except the country on this side of the Rhine, we possess manorial estates, and with them the means of forming an order of nobles, and an excellent criterion for selecting the members of it, viz., the possession of such an estate, coupled either with an hereditary and unforfeited nobility, or with the attainment of a certain grade in the military or civil service. Formerly, the possessor of a manor was only eligible to the Diet when of noble descent, and because this was preposterous (thus, for example, in one of the Saxon circles, there is only a single proprietor of noble descent remaining), they have now gone to the other extreme, and make the simple fact of possession the sole condition. At the same time, the nobility, who are deeply encumbered, are selling one estate after another, and the new proprietors are generally men of the lowest extraction. Well, the nobles are now remonstrating against this, in provinces where they have on the whole maintained their ground, as in Münster, for instance; and what do they demand? The old law; that none but noblemen by birth or creation, shall be eligible to the Chambers. Now every grand duke will grant patents of nobility on the payment of fees, and, in consequence, a commoner who prides himself upon the honour of his class, will not allow himself to be ennobled. Thus I should be excluded; every contractor in Darmstadt or Carlsruhe, who is willing to spend a few thousand florins for it, would be admissible. Had I been able to make my voice heard, when I made the assertion, in attestation of which I adduced evidence from the President Hénault, that this was formerly the case in France, and supported it by obvious proofs, that thus alone a self-renewing order of nobles

could exist, the public would have been delighted. As it is, they are more displeased that the aristocracy should exist as an order, than pleased that it should have been divested of all moral significance. One hopeless circumstance is the despotic influence exercised by revolutionary ideas among us Germans, wherever absolute power can avail itself of them for its own purposes. In Westphalia and other parts, we have in the entailed freeholds an hereditary yeomanry, in whom, wherever they exist, we possess a highly respectable peasant aristocracy, wealthy enough to give their younger sons a good education, with the consciousness of an honourable descent and a youth not depressed by poverty, and thus to add respectable members to the middle class, especially to the clergy of both confessions. But wherever the Code Napoléon has been introduced, its adherents, who have gained the public ear by assuming to be the representatives of public opinion, insist upon the divisibility of landed property. They had already surreptitiously obtained a confirmation of the French and Westphalian ordinances; and though this is suspended, Heaven knows how the matter will be decided at last. Yet people have before their eyes the example of other German countries, where this cursed divisibility has existed for centuries, and the whole agricultural population are beggars. In the district of Montabaur, now belonging to Nassau, no deputy can be chosen for the Diet, because it does not contain a single elector. The qualification for an elector consists in paying *one* florin land-tax. This sounds incredible, but my informant lives close to the district, and has known that part of the country from his infancy.

Here on the Rhine, the larger estates are entirely disappearing, and the smaller ones are constantly divided and subdivided; and what a class are the peasantry! An estate which is considered one of the largest was sold lately for about 85,000 francs. Manufacturers, advocates, &c., buy plots of land and farm them out, so that in the neighbourhood of the towns the peasant proprietors are vanishing, as in Italy. The agriculturists, excepting the vine-growers, are suffering

severely from the low prices; yet their condition is incomparably better than in Suabia and in Holstein, where a manor, which I know, was sold lately for a quarter of what the deceased possessor expended on its purchase twenty-five years ago, and in real improvements; in a village belonging to it, every peasant is bankrupt. One great difficulty, is the really frightful increase of population, to which people are now beginning to turn their attention after having long childishly rejoiced in it. You will scarcely believe that with us in Prussia, where the population does not yet amount to eleven millions, it is increasing at the rate of more than 200,000 a year. In these parts, however, you see new houses springing up in great number; I hear the Moselle districts are particularly flourishing in this respect, in consequence of the increased protective duties on foreign wines; that new houses are building in all directions, and fresh land brought under cultivation, but in other parts of Germany this is not the case. Our manufacturers are maintaining their ground better than I expected; in many articles in which twenty years ago the English manufactures quite predominated, they no longer compete with our own; for instance, in broad-cloth, other kind of woollen goods, and leather; the demand for foreign iron-wares is constantly diminishing. The misfortune is that the manufacturers over-produce, and then the necessity of selling makes them vulnerable to every accident. As the price of the raw material falls, the manufacturer is obliged to reduce the prices of the articles manufactured when it was higher. The number of paupers is increasing immensely. Cologne has recovered itself to an extraordinary extent since 1814; houses have more than doubled in value, the population has greatly increased, but one learns with horror that out of 55,000 inhabitants, there are 20,000 in the receipt of alms. What will be the position of Europe within a century?

I turn from statistics to a subject which indeed our statists do not overlook in their tables—namely, literature. Poetry is quite at an end. Nothing but novels—precisely what we cannot write — are written now; their favourite scene at

present is Greece. Of philosophy people seem to have had enough at present, and during the lull, a few here and there are actively prosecuting really profound researches into the Greek philosophers, and coming to perceive that speculation has been exhausted in its results. The study of Roman jurisprudence is carried on with great vigour. Some excellent and many monstrous works have seen the light, in consequence of the shock which I have given to the criticism of ancient history. One book that I should rejoice to see in your hands is Menzel's History of the period from 1786 to 1815, of which the first part has just appeared. It is pervaded by the soundest views, the most thorough contempt for the miserable wisdom of the revolutionists, and such a correct tact in discovering truth, that one is astonished to see a professor in Breslau able to pass judgment upon facts as if he lived in the busy scene of action. Unfortunately the book has been written too hastily, as is usually the case with us, namely, while the printing is in progress, and hence it is wanting in finish. It is far superior to another work, the latter half of which relates to a portion of the same period, F. C. Schlosser's History of the Eighteenth Century. I am acquainted with the author of the latter; he is a most upright man, and his moral sense is pure; hence he abhors and despises the Revolution in reality: but he fell in with Guizot at Paris, nay with Grégoire, and it has led him into ugly inconsistencies here and there. For this reason a translation of his work is coming out in Paris. Out of a hundred of those who speak on such matters in Germany, you would hardly find one who would not regard Liberalism as the lesser of two evils, and hardly five who would not regard it as absolutely excellent. Manuel's portrait has hung beside that of Mina in all the print-shops, but he seems at last to be forgotten for a time.

In the Frankfort reading-room, there are two copies of the "Constitutionnel," and the people quarrel who shall get it first. Here the police prohibit that paper, and foolishly enough admit the "Courier," which it is scarcely possible

to see the first day, while it is very seldom that any one takes up the "Journal des Debats." The "Allgemeine Zeitung" has drawn in its claws a little after very serious threats, still it often gives vent to its spite. An Ultra journal has been set on foot here, which is injured by the contemptible character of its editor (he was an agent of King Christophe, at Hayti, to hire artisans), and an affectation of bigotted Catholicism; but some very remarkable documents appear in its pages, and some very unpleasant truths for the opposite faction. All such writers, however, carp at your Richelieu ministry. † †, in the "Allgemeine Zeitung," who now swears by the present ministry, will probably in two months adore those whose opposition he has hitherto, on many occasions, gently blamed.

For what place do you stand? You will easily fancy that I am as much interested about that as about the general results of the election; though my wish is, that you may remain in peace under your lofty blue sky. But is this my real wish? I will not be too sure about it, for when we are considering where we shall live for the future, as it will most likely not be in Berlin, there is, in fact, only one reason that decides us to take up our abode here; it is the desire to settle at no impassable distance from you—a thought that pierces my heart when Berlin is talked about, and makes it almost impossible for me to think of living there. If you retire into your province, we shall be quite near each other; and even if you live in the capital, you will no doubt sometimes visit Lorraine. And as nothing binds me to Bonn, we might perhaps settle at Treves, if you lived at Metz. I shall never forget your saying in your last letter, that you and your wife felt the want of my presence in your afflictions.* I cannot tell you how deeply I thank you for it. How we miss you! . . . .

* De Serre had lost his mother and a child during this year.

CCCX.

BONN, *29th March*, 1824.

. . . . I think I understand you that the 12th was your birthday. We celebrated it quite in private, and Marcus entreated, in his childish prayers, that you and yours may receive every blessing, and for us,—that we may see you again. Tell me, dear friend, whether I was wrong in the day, though a factual error about the date would be of no more consequence, than a mistake as to the historical object of your worship. . . . . I cannot write to you any more to-day, as I have charge of the children, and the hour is come at which I am to give my eldest little girl a lesson. . . . .

I cannot obtain a certainty with respect to my future position. You will agree, that I must have a very strong party feeling when I say that, in spite of these circumstances, I *am rejoiced* to hear of the reduction of the rate of interest in France, though it affects the greater part of my fortune, provided that the emigrants, &c., are to receive some compensation. . . . .

CCCXI.

TO MADAME NIEBUHR.

BERLIN, *18th May*, 1824.

I arrived here on Sunday, with which ends the first act of this drama. It was still broad daylight when I arrived, and I would much rather have got in at a later hour. I went the same evening to Savigny, where I found old acquaintances assembled at tea. You can imagine, my Gretchen, how the meeting with friends and acquaintance, and the sight of Berlin with all its painful recollections, agitated my heart. . . . .

As to the essential part of our concerns, I have received as yet, simply a recommendation to return to Rome, to which I replied, that the same reasons which necessitated the abandonment of my post there forbade my return; that my grounds for this step were well known, and were not founded

in self-interest or ambition. So much was clear, that Count Bernstorf would willingly consent to granting me leave of absence, but this would be a mere postponement of the decision, which would not be of any use. In the afternoon I saw the Crown Prince; his reception of me was most cordial. I was with him three hours, and he invited me to spend some time with him regularly every afternoon.

I have dined with the King to-day: his reception of me was gracious. . . . .

As you will easily imagine, I am everywhere assailed by persuasions to remain here. . . . .

The attempts to embellish the city do not please me, but I have not yet seen any of the country houses, which may, perhaps, show more taste. I do not at all like the theatre, nor the guardhouse with its Doric portico. The Potsdam gate has been pulled down. and is to be replaced in a lighter style, by no means such as befits a large city, the capital of a military State. . . . .

CCCXII.

BERLIN, 21*st May*, 1824.

. . . . Would to God you were here, that I might have the comfort of talking over things and deliberating, if our fate is to be decided now. What with the dizzy whirl of gaiety, and my complete solitude when at home,—where such innumerable recollections crowd in upon me, that I seem like a spectre to myself,—my mind is not less overclouded than *this side* of my outward life.

The Crown Prince has improved beyond description. His heart remains what it ever was, and his mind is enriched by an extensive knowledge of facts. Prince William appears equally warm-hearted and good. In truth, the man who is not satisfied with these Princes must make unwarrantable demands upon the world. Both received me as cordially as if I had been a friend of their own rank. The circle of my acquaintance is very large, indeed, much larger than I was aware of till now; hence, my time is split up in a way that

distracts and confuses me. But I am received with the greatest kindness and cordiality both by my old friends and by those of recent date. I find nearly all (not Roeder, who is very fortunate) grown old, and most of them stout.

There is much less life and gaiety among them than formerly; on the other hand, show and luxury have increased.

Now I think, my dear wife, that this last circumstance decides the question of our removal to Berlin; unless, contrary to all probability, a moral obligation should compel it. But really I see no reason why we should settle here; for, although my heart beats when I think of the Crown Prince,—though some friends and the places which awaken melancholy recollections, (for instance, the Thiergarten, where I long to go,) are dear to me,—though the Library would be a great advantage, and I might have much refreshing intercourse; yet, I feel at every step that all which belongs to my former life has passed away, and that you and the children alone make up my world; a world for which I had a precious setting in the lovely, the glorious sky that encircled us with its brightness and beauty: and then, too, de Serre's presence! I miss these blessings now, but in weighing the considerations that present themselves with regard to the choice of our abode, I must look to it that my leisure and repose of mind are not destroyed. . . . .

The changes in the city are in some parts very great, but in general it is a mere dressing up. The shops have increased very much, and betray a fearful amount of luxury. . . . .

CCCXIII.

BERLIN, *30th May*, 1824.

. . . . You have misunderstood one sentence in my letter, dear wife. If I merely spoke of you and the children in expressing my hopes for the future, I did not mean that I expected none but positively gloomy days for myself, but that it is only with and through you all, that serenity and cheerfulness can be diffused over the evening of my life. My

youthful life, which had up to that time been one connected whole, ended with my fortieth year, and the roots which had nourished it were cut away. A new life had to grow up. I am now limited to this new state of existence for the remainder of my days with you and the children.

Meanwhile, you may be *quite* satisfied, my dear wife, that all will go on *much* better if we can but have a settled future to look forward to, with an income sufficient for our wants. If, in addition to this, I can find full occupation, and God preserves us from severe misfortunes, and continues to me my mental powers, you may be sure that I shall thankfully recognise what I possess.

I need only look at many other families to be conscious what I have in my wife and children, and I assure you that I feel myself much less deteriorated by the influences of time than most of my acquaintance. May God preserve me from living so completely under the influence of the world as many do here; whatever may be the contrast between their life and mine in point of splendour. The elasticity of the intellect is destroyed but too easily by splendour and dissipation; particularly when one mixes with people of very different stations.

I should like to have sent you a copy of my application to Bernstorf, but I have not time. I have reminded him that the ambassadorship was granted me unasked, and how the King had given me a promise, to which I limited my requests.

How could I think of returning to Rome, dearest wife, when you say you are "trying to familiarise yourself with the thought of it," and beg me to "forget you in the matter!" What stronger expression of your dislike to Rome could I quote to Count Bernstorf? And what must I be, if in the knowledge of your feelings on the subject, I would decide in opposition to them? But do not suppose, my darling Gretchen, that I did not know them to their full extent before you wrote. . . . .

I always receive messages to you from many friends. At Madame Von Savigny's, I met her sister Bettina several times.

A few days ago she threatened to pay me a visit in my room. I shall, of course, anticipate her.

Give my love and kisses from me to the dear children, and tell me all you can about them. Every trifle that happens with you interests me. Little Charles's paleness makes me almost more uneasy than anything.

CCCXIV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BERLIN, 31*st May*, 1824.

Here the recollections of former times rise up like ghosts before me at every step; in the Thiergarten, where there is not a path that does not remind me of the past, it is sometimes almost more than I can bear, and yet I cannot help going there again and again. It is so distinctly before my eyes, how we used to walk there in 1810, Amelia, and you, and I; how in the autumn after, and in the following winter, and spring, and summer, when I was full of life and energy, and my history was daily growing beneath my hands, I found recreation and refreshment there in Amelia's society: so too, in 1812 and 1813, in the intense political excitement in which every other feeling was merged; and then came afterwards, those heart-rending drives with my dying wife, &c.

My sorrow is seldom relieved by tears.

When I pass the house where my highest happiness departed, a shudder runs through me. A very worthy man lives there, a M. Von Schönberg, who would be happy to see me, but I cannot enter the house.

Savigny, Nicolovius, Eichhorn, and other friends are what they were to me. I saw Göschen in Göttingen. He is a true pattern of self-sacrifice for his family.

My Lucia is very ill, my angel child! If the worst were possible! I at a distance, my poor Gretchen alone in her grief!

CCCXV.

TO MADAME NIEBUHR.

BERLIN, 1*st June*, 1824.

. . . . Your letter reached me, darling wife, as I had written these words. I tore it open with a strange sudden feeling of anguish. You can tell how I am since. The violence of my anguish is proportioned to the strength of my previous security. My Lucia, my beloved child! It is like another pang to me, and yet a consolation that the child has seemed to cling to me so lately. I cannot realise the idea of losing her. And I do not despair yet; but I shall await the post with torturing anxiety. If you want me I shall hasten to you. Everything else must be put aside if I must come to you, comfort you, help you to bear up.

May God grant us quiet! How thankful I will be for all that I have often hitherto not esteemed at its true value!

The present position of our affairs does indeed require my presence, but it is not absolutely necessary. Sympathy would impel Count Bernstorf to hasten the decision as much as he can. The Crown Prince too, and President Von Schönberg would do all in their power to further it.

Be quite easy on this subject, therefore, if you want me. With all this it will be a hard task for me to-day to accompany Count B. to Tegel. Madame Von Humboldt was sympathising just as she used to be at Rome, and sends her hearty love to you. Count B. was extremely friendly and communicative.

God reward the dear children for comforting you. . . . .

CCCXVI.

TO COUNT DE SERRE.

MY DEAR FRIEND, BERLIN, 6*th June*, 1824.

My long silence after the receipt of the last letter you wrote me in the past year, deprives me of all right to complain of fate if I obtain no letters from you—these

precious blessings of my later years. Therefore I will not murmur, but I have long been sad at hearing nothing at all of you, and now I begin to be anxious. Three cases are possible; my two letters, or one from you may have been lost; you may not have liked to write with a heavy heart; lastly, some circumstance may have robbed me of your friendship. Of these three cases, the first would be bearable; the second, God forbid; the third, I cannot even picture to myself. I know, that at a great distance misrepresentations and perversions of facts may sever the most perfect friendships; but I know also that you have given me your friendship as fully as I have devoted mine to you. I know that all the arts of hell could as little induce me to believe anything against you as against my wife. I know that if you could have seen all the thoughts that have passed through my mind since we have known each other,—nay since I first loved you, before we met,—there might be many of them that would need all your indulgence towards human weakness; but none relating to yourself that would be inconsistent with our friendship,—none that could make me unworthy of this blessing. But dispel my fears, dear friend; I have no scruple in imploring you only just to tell me that you are unchanged towards me, and how you are. I trust, in God, that you have no bad news to give me.

As it is possible that my letters, I. and II., may never have reached you, I will at any rate repeat here, that in the first, I asked you conditionally to stand godfather to my expected child; and in the second, that in anticipation of your consent, I had united our new-born infant to you in this bond. His birth freed us from great anxieties on his mother's account. . . . . But while I am thus writing to you, I am uncertain whether we still possess him, for since I left the Rhine, the baby and Lucia have both been attacked with inflammatory colds, which are epidemic there in consequence of the horrible weather; Lucia has recovered—at least her mother thinks so—but when she last wrote, the infant lay so ill that she had scarcely any hope of him; and was suffering so dreadfully, that his mother prayed to God

for his release, unless he should completely recover. This sorrow she has had to bear separated from me, and without the consolation of sympathy and help from any female friend. My anxiety about her and the children, especially my favourite Lucia, I am forced to endure amidst the bustle of the metropolis, where I am endeavouring to obtain the decision of our fate, which I found it impossible to accomplish through letters. But I am looking forward now with a beating heart to a probably decisive letter, and shall try to divert my thoughts by writing to you.

This journey to Berlin is a new and decisive step in our life, of which it is worth while to give an account to a friend. All my letters representing that I could not return to Rome on account of my wife, whether it was owing to her absolute incapability of enduring the climate, or to a home-sickness that made every thing insupportable to her; that my mission had only been intended as a temporary one, and that I had an express promise under the King's hand, that after the completion of the treaty I should return to resume my former position; all these letters remained without any answer at all, and it was only indirectly that Count Bernstorf gave me to understand that I had better come here to submit my application myself. The Crown Prince also insisted on my coming to Berlin from different motives. It was almost unendurable to come here as a solicitant in order to hear anew the exhortations already repeated to weariness, to do what I should so gladly do if I *could*—return to Rome; and to be obliged still to repeat the same answer, and to be reduced to beg for, as an uncertain and special favour, a right assured to me by the royal word, and the fulfilment of which places me in a less favourable position than any of those who formerly stood on a level with me. But the period of my furlough had expired, and what else could I do, as I could get no written answer? As to the result of my visit, I cannot well say anything till the King's decision is before me.

The investigations connected with the disturbances of the past years are still proceeding, and the depositions of

several young men, above all those of Witt Döring,* who is now in captivity at Bayrenth, seem to prove, that, about the time of Sands' assassination, there was really a sort of conspiracy on foot among the students and those immediately connected with them, led by so-called captains, the spirit and aims of which were seditious and mischievous, though in many cases varnished over with a show of piety, &c.; but their incapacity for anything except to commit single acts of assassination, was evidently as great as the criminality of their delusion. No one can discover the slightest indication that this conspiracy ever extended into the army, or into the other classes of society; it seems to have been confined to wicked and foolish students' vagaries.

What sort of a figure shall we make in history, when the government of a great kingdom, supported by an army of whose fidelity there is not even a suspicion, fears such an enemy, while in France, the government are taking advantage of victory to demonstrate their security by pardoning open rebels!

Throughout Germany the political fever seems almost to have ceased, though it certainly must have run very high some years ago. Each has given up his particular castle in the air, and if all Greece were to experience the fate of Chios, it would only produce a transient effervescence. I cannot properly make out with what people now seek to replace the want of some powerful excitement; they have not returned to the old quiet family life. The churches are well attended; and, as far as you can judge from outward appearances, there seems to be much piety; external irreligion has really disappeared, and since the exaggerations of a few sectaries are not countenanced by the government, they

* This Witt Döring was a hot-headed and unstable character, who had, when a member of the Burschenschaft committed acts of violence in spite of the remonstrances of his fellow members. When he was afterwards imprisoned, finding that the stream set against his party, or perhaps in a fit of repentance at his really unjustifiable conduct, he turned round, and by his exaggerated confessions led the government to arrest many of his associates, who were thus brought into undeserved misfortune. He afterwards accepted office under the Austrian government.

do not call forth any re-action. Unhappily, irritation frequently arises between Catholics and Protestants, for which some priests among the former, and officials among the latter, are equally in fault. In legislation the most shallow liberal principles prevail among the different ministries, and even among the most able of the men high in office. Do not think it a contradiction that I speak of the shallowness of the principles of those to whom I allow the possession of more than common ability in administration. Since I have been here, I have met once more a friend of high political standing, who unites to unspotted integrity and extraordinary talent in the conduct of all kinds of business, an obstinate persistence in revolutionary principles, though he is a decided monarchist; an inflexibility in his opinions, and contempt for all that contradicts them, which drive an old acquaintance, of a directly opposite way of thinking, to despair. Formerly we often agreed negatively. A great void is felt by all, which leads to amusements without pleasure. Luxury, such as was unknown even before 1806, pervades all classes, and the booksellers state, that owing to this, though everything except houses has become so much cheaper, and the public salaries have been raised, yet that scholars, and people of the classes who receive a liberal education, do not buy more books than during the time when the country was under the yoke of Napoleon; a time to which good men look back with regret, because then community of feeling, an intense interest in the general welfare, and noble determination reigned in every breast. The landed proprietors are universally complaining, yet if they were not so deeply in debt, their position would be far from desperate in the manufacturing provinces, and in those where they have skill enough to avail themselves of other productions besides corn. Manufacturers are making more progress than is confessed, and both our own and the French manufactured goods are competing with the English as they never did before. The average physical well-being is undoubtedly raised; and even where the proprietors are not prospering, the workmen and

day-labourers are only so much the better off. The prices of all manufactured articles have fallen so amazingly, that stuffs which were consumed exclusively among the richer classes only eight years ago, are now within reach of quite the lower orders. But one species of luxury opens the way to every other, and such as you see here is intolerably unsuitable in a State like ours. Stock-jobbing has found its way here, too; and if we go on in our present course, among us, too, even the women will soon begin to take an interest in the exchanges. It seems as if this sort of gambling helped to relieve the want of some violent mental excitement, which politics do not afford. Contentment exists *no where*. This is not only true of Berlin, but also of the smallest and most flourishing provinces. It surprised me to hear from an excellent man in Brunswick, that the people acknowledge this to themselves; while he recognised expressly how impossible it is for us to esteem ourselves happy as a nation, because of our mental and moral deficiencies. At most, he said it was but a North American prosperity; in fact, the people did not wish for more.

I am concluding this letter on the eleventh. Meanwhile, I have received news of the death of my youngest child; the mother has borne his sufferings and his loss with a heroic and heavenly spirit. May God spare us any fresh calamity and support the poor mother till I return, and help her to endure. It has not been the child's fate to have the happiness of growing up in a peculiar relationship to you, my dear friend. God protect you from the repetition of a similar misfortune. I long to hear from you, embrace you in thought, and send my hearty greetings to your noble-minded wife and the dear children, who will by this time be scarcely able to recollect us. Write to me at Bonn.

With my whole heart your friend.

CCCXVII.

TO MADAME NIEBUHR.

BERLIN, *9th June*, 1824.

Presentiments are nothing! I had drawn hopes from the conclusion of your last letter that almost amounted to confidence. Hence, I broke open your letter with less anxiety. I thank God, my beloved wife, that he has given and preserved to you the strength of heart which has enabled you to endure this terrible time with such fortitude.

Even the day before yesterday my first impulse was to hasten to you; how much more so now that I know you are sitting by the corpse of our beloved little one, with a heart heavy with tears! But as our fate will now most likely be decided in the course of a few days, it would be thought a piece of madness on my part, if I left without having taken leave of the King and thanked him, in order to gain a day or two. So I cannot yet fix the time of my departure.

Let us consult together upon our future plan of life with perfect openness and tender confidence. I have learnt to appreciate you, and your whole worth thoroughly, my Gretchen, and this misfortune has brought us nearer to each other, and perfected my love for you more than any happiness could have done. And therefore we will take this affliction as another blessing from God's hand.

All that you tell me of the grief of our two elder children is a consolation to me. I press each and all of them to my faithful heart.

Give my best remembrances to Brandis. I am buying little presents for the children, but with what a weight at my heart! I feel as though I had lost all security that they were still mine.

CCCXVIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *2nd September*, 1824.

. . . . I thank you for your sympathy with me about de Serre's death. It is an immense loss for me, no man was so dear to me; no human being esteemed me so highly. He had no secrets from me, and I was more to him than all the world besides, beyond his own family. Under the succession of heavy blows that fell upon him and his wife during the past year, their sigh was, if only Niebuhr was here! He has departed to God, and his warm affection for me he has carried with him, and his family look upon me as a kinsman, the more so, as most of their relations have been unfaithful to them. Our age has not seen a more brilliant or powerful genius. I purpose to write his life if the family can supply me with data for some periods of it. I possess many from his own accounts to myself. His life would be the history of France since 1814: I have courage enough to write it, though it will not even be the liberals who will make the greatest outcry against my work. What bound de Serre and myself so indissolubly together was, that our views harmonised so completely from the very centre of our being, that each could read into the soul of the other, and no clashing of opinion could ever arise between us. He had the purest soul, and the most loving heart on earth. Why have you never known him? Farewell.

CCCXIX.

BERLIN, *14th December*, 1824.

That my taking a part in the deliberations of the Council of State can be productive of any good, is a delusion springing from my dear Prince's affection for me. Moreover, I come to the subjects now under discussion without local knowledge, and they relate to a measure so completely spoiled long ago by earlier laws, that there would be little hope of effecting any improvement, even if I were better

prepared. Many, in other respects intelligent, people do not know the consequences of their own votes, and in a mixed assembly you cannot call their attention to them, or else you lose other votes. Thus some voted yesterday against the claims of the poor cotters to right of common, from a misunderstanding, over which I could have wept; and some aristocrats had the humanity to vote in their favour. Thus too, I am certain not to succeed in carrying motions for the rescue and maintenance of the peasant order, though important voices among the aristocracy will be on my side.

The Bank project does not come under discussion in the Council of State, but is referred to special conferences. It has not yet been communicated to me, I expect it to-day or to-morrow. It is a great satisfaction to know that one is separated from one's family for real reasons, not imaginary ones, for about the Bank I certainly have a voice, and very few people here have one.

I see no prospect of returning home in less than two or three months from this time; I shall not know when I may seriously begin to think about it, till the Bank business is ended, which cannot be dragged on to an interminable length like other things, as the bankers demand a decision.

I have met with little of a cheering kind here, excepting the disposition of the Crown Prince. I shun society and decline all evening assemblies, except formal presentations which cannot be avoided. My old connexions are broken up on all sides, and I do not know how we should make a place for ourselves here, even if we had a superfluity of wealth.

There are some good souls, especially among the nobility and at court, who see me again with a sort of superstitious hope; but I tell them myself, that though their hopes touch my heart, they are illusory, and will not be justified. Such expressions *give me no pleasure*, just because they rest upon a delusion.

How Gretchen will get through this winter God knows! Her companion does not come till the middle of March. . . . .

CCCXX.

TO MADAME NIEBUHR.

BERLIN, *Christmas evening*, 1824.

. . . . I was at Buttman's on Sunday evening. Dr. Waagen, who has written upon van Eyck was there. Of all the people who have written upon the history of art, he appears to me to have incomparably the most clear and acute mind, and he really comes to practical results that solve questions which I had hitherto laid before all other historians of art in vain. Rauch too, is in a delightful state of activity. . . . .

CCCXXI.

BERLIN, *5th January*, 1825.

. . . . I had just begun, the night before last, to re-arrange what I had written at first about the Bank scheme, in order to bring it into a definite shape, when a note came from Count L——, to request that I would now proceed to draw up my remarks. I now set about the work with redoubled zeal. I had concluded my scrutiny, I had tested all the separate points, and was clear about them; all I had to do (the arrangement I had also settled in thought) was to write. I finished writing it last night, and as I had got the address of a copyist I was saved this labour. But I had afterwards a long job to do for the next sitting of the Council of State. Savigny is appointed to make a report upon the same subject. I wish his health may not give way. It is not good just now, and he is quite overladen with work. He has frequent returns of violent pain in the head. He is going on with his History, delivering his lectures, and added to these, there is the work for the Council of State, and the Court of Revision. It is too much for one man's shoulders; and then there is his infirm health.

Thinking about the Bank scheme really puts me into a sort of feverish state. I believe it to be fraught with ruin, and yet see that there is danger of its passing; there are so

many and such important persons interested in it. The speculators must have some sort of security of its success, for even now, promissory notes for shares in the Bank are selling on the Exchange; which certainly is mere gambling; still it shows how eager people are in this game. The consequences would show afterwards that I had been in the right, but then it would be too late. I write to you about this business, my Gretchen, because my head is full of it; and you must, at least, share my interests, and know what I am busied with, although you cannot enter into the subject. Besides, its importance will help to reconcile you to the absence of your husband.

CCCXXII.

BERLIN, 10*th January*, 1825.

. . . . I have sent in my report, and have received since, a written answer, with many fair words about the "importance of my observations," "the value of such a report," &c. I do not know if I am right, but I fancy that all this conceals a rejection of my services in this matter. Well, I must be contented with having done my part. The result does not depend upon me. Still, it will be difficult to submit to it when I have such decided opinions, and know that I understand the matter. All who were interested in the projects of the share-brokers, and all who reckon on places and salaries connected with the Bank will become my enemies; this I cannot help, any more than that others will blame me who have no such aims, but have allowed themselves to be deluded.

I have got a letter from M. Von Stein. He calls it criminal if I spare myself on your account and the children's; he dreams that I could confer important benefits on the State, from which I withdraw myself in an unconscientious way, from selfish motives, &c. I will send a mild answer to the noble old man, but not before all is decided; then I will show him that I am capable of acting fearlessly; but he shall not delude me with his pictures of the imagination. For the rest, the letter expresses much affection, and a

high esteem for me. Happy are they who live in obscurity and quiet!

Yesterday there was a dinner at Count Lottum's, a ball and supper in the evening at the Brockhausens'; I went away before supper. I am going to dine with Humboldt to-day, to have a conversation with him about Champollion's work on the hieroglyphics. You very seldom get conversations of this kind here. These discoveries are the most brilliant of our age, and one cannot rejoice in them too much; they, too, confirm Herodotus. . . . .

CCCXXIII.

BERLIN, 1*st February*, 1825.

As Amsterdam is nearer to Bonn than to Berlin, you will have had the pleasure of learning the safe arrival of the ship from Leghorn, laden with our goods, earlier than I, dearest wife. I have really rejoiced greatly to hear of it, for I looked upon the ship as lost, and I am not ashamed to confess, that next to your present of the She-wolf and Zurlo's vase, our dear Marcus' pebbles are my greatest subject of joy. It has often gone to my heart to think that the darling child should lose these treasures. I only hope that the injury to the pictures will prove inconsiderable.

After this joyful news, and a walk along old accustomed ways and paths, I should write to you in excellent spirits, if the aspect of affairs were but better. . . . . They are hastening to the goal and seem to have assured themselves of a majority. As soon as I can know positively that it is so, I think of writing to the King and conjuring him for the last time to listen to my warning, and to grant me leave to explain my views to him by word of mouth. How the King will take this, it is impossible to foresee. Certainly not ungraciously, unless others prejudice him against me; else, it must be confessed, all hope of court favour is over. If he did, such a reward for long-tried fidelity and integrity would

grieve me, but it would not injure me, and as soon as I can sing with Paul Gerhard—

> "Nun geht frisch drauf, es geht nach Haus;
> Ihr Rösslein regt die Beine;"

the time will have come when the innocent gaiety of our children, and the approach of the spring, will enable us to drive these gloomy subjects from our minds.

Now to other things.—Dear Savigny is very unwell again. . . . . I will write to M. Von Stein. Let us look upon the dear noble old man as a father, and receive what he says in that light; he means it all kindly, and if he comes, show him every kindness you can, dear Gretchen. His petulance is really almost his only fault: and you are obliged to bear mine, which certainly is of *another kind*, but I do not know whether it is any better on that account. . . . . .

CCCXXIV.

BERLIN, 29*th January*, 1825.

. . . . It is an old maxim, to let the log lie when you cannot lift it. But when you find yourself unable to avert a coming evil, when you see the object frustrated on which you have expended your best powers from the purest motives, you draw back at last, and cease to interfere, but leave things to take their own course, and, for your own part, only try to think no more about them: and this is a most unhappy result; for that love for the general welfare which makes us forget ourselves, has a purifying and ennobling influence. I have said to many persons, "If you would speak out, and make known what you say is your conviction, without considering whether it would give offence or not, such a weight of opinion would be formed, that the project would inevitably founder." But then, they excuse themselves by saying it would be presumption, &c. Things look rather better than when I last wrote. They are talking of proposing another scheme; which would perhaps be less pernicious, and just on that account cannot succeed in passing; it would not allow sufficient profits to share-broking. . . . .

CCCXXV.

BERLIN, *8th February*, 1825.

. . . . When I have finished my business here, I shall enter a new epoch of my life with a firm step; and with our dear children, above all with my better self Marcus, and in home pleasures, particularly those which our garden will give us, for which a strong taste and desire have awakened in me, I trust we shall lead not merely a life of serene resignation, but of bright happiness. We will make little excursions too. The impression of the scenery and ruins of Heidelberg, stands quite apart from all that I have seen in Germany, except the Tyrol; we will go there again before long.

While one translation of my History is already begun, a second translator has applied to me. At the same time, the Duke of Broglie is writing a treatise on its contents. On the other hand, a pamphlet has appeared at Warsaw, in which I am called a Radical of the Cato Street school, (where Thistlewood and his accomplices, who wanted to murder the ministers, used to assemble), and it is said that Sand's mind was formed by my lectures! What nonsense! This comes from a certain Zinserling, who printed a eulogy of Jerome Buonaparte, in 1814. The late Christian Stolberg threatened to horsewhip him for it, and he bolted. He had had an appointment in the Westphalian police.

CCCXXVI.

BERLIN, *16th February*, 1825.

. . . . The pay for the attendance in the Council is so large that I do not use it all. It seemed to me dishonourable to take more than I wanted; but I am told that it would be considered unbecoming to decline it. So I will apply the surplus to assist those who have suffered in Dithmarsh by the floods. You would, no doubt, approve of my doing so, if I could consult you. I will send the money to

Dora, that she may see that is divided so as to be a real benefit, not among too many.

If our things have not been shipwrecked in the Texel, I shall buy some more plate; else the money must go to replace what we have lost.

Give my kind remembrances to Brandis. I often talk of him with poor Cousin: to whom people are extremely polite now. . . . .

CCCXXVII.

BERLIN, 21*st February*, 1825.

. . . . Yesterday, on my little Cornelia's birthday, my thoughts were more than usually with you. The weather was beautiful, and I hope you took a drive to Godesberg. I went with Perthès to dine at the Reimers'. Not until to-day did I think of the arrival of the Cossacks on this day in 1813. Thus do we forget! You are no doubt right in thinking that it is wiser not to give the children so many presents as I send them in my impatience. . . . . 23rd.—There was much that cheered me in your letter. First, that your companion is really an assistance to you; next, that you have found time to take up Italian again with my sweet little Amelia. This reminds me that I must in future devote a few hours every week to reading the Italian Grammar with Marcus. Then, too, I am glad that we seem likely to be able to hire the garden in the first place. Do not you think, too, that as soon as we can be quite certain of remaining in Bonn, which can scarcely indeed be any longer considered as doubtful, we might as well buy the garden of Dr. V. at his price? I do not properly understand myself what it is that gives me such a downright passionate longing to possess this garden; it is as if I had a certainty that we shall spend many happy days there with the children. Give me commissions to buy seeds for you. With the sad state of corn cultivation, it may even become a public service to introduce the culture of vegetables that have been hitherto neglected. One can distribute seeds;

in this way a demand for them gradually arises, and from the demand cultivation. From next autumn, we can begin to raise fruit trees. What pleasure I have often received, when a child, from the blossoming and fruit-bearing trees in my father's garden!

May it not be our duty to follow a noble example, though at considerable cost to ourselves? You have, no doubt, heard that several persons in Paris, of right feeling, but of quite opposite opinions on other points, have joined together to assist Greece, and among other things are trying to raise ten or twelve millions of francs as a loan. If the Greek government can procure a tolerable sum of money now, we may hope that it will be able to put down the rebels, and break their power entirely; and perhaps even win over the Turkish pashas.

The Crown Prince has given me some volumes of Piranesi, of which he has a double set. . . . .

I am just about to take the step at which I hinted lately in a few words to you. I hope that upon mature consideration you will approve of it. This step is, to send in a letter to the ministry of Public Instruction, requesting that if I should wish to deliver lectures at Bonn, I may be permitted to do so without the formality, which in my case would be unsuitable, of an examination by the other professors of my faculty. I do not thereby take upon myself any obligation, but I mean to act as if I did. This kind of work satisfies my sense of honour, and my need of a sphere of active usefulness; it will keep my mind fresher, to be thus daily stimulated to intellectual communication; and further, it will also give me a reasonable ground for declining frequent journeys hither, as I cannot then be continually interrupting my lectures. And will they not be their own reward? In many respects, too, it would remind me of the happy time that I passed after resolving to deliver the course in 1810. Then, as now, after protracted wanderings, I regained my books and tranquillity. I think I should choose the History of Greece, in the first instance, and only lecture this time till about July, and then make a tour with

you. A new existence has now been created for us; and I feel it to be of inexpressible importance to keep fast hold of it, not to begin afresh again and again.

CCCXXVIII.

BERLIN, *2nd March*, 1825.

. . . . The wind was very high last night. At every gust I think of the poor dwellers in the marshes. Vincke* is such a thoroughly excellent man! He has written to the King, asking permission to make a collection for the East Frieslanders, and requesting a donation from his Majesty himself in aid of his former subjects. The King has given 3000 dollars, and a permission for the subscription. I have contributed twenty-five dollars to begin with, and think we can give a second subscription of the same amount. These lowlanders are like kinsmen to me, and it grieves me deeply that East Friesland should be separated from our monarchy. I think very highly of this race. Vincke goes on all occasions so straight to the point, without questioning and fear of consequences; he is so mild of heart, and yet so open and straightforward, and so thoroughly loyal. He has become still dearer to me than he ever was before. . . . .

I have just been reading in Cicero a maxim of some worldly-minded Greek philosophers, which he finds detestable; that in friendship we should never forget that we may cease to be friends. With the noblest class of human beings this is certainly detestable, and wherever there is a warm mutual attachment. But in other cases it has really a good meaning. You ought to be cautious in your acquaintanceship how you overstep the bounds of friendly good will, unless you are absolutely certain that your connexion cannot be interrupted and broken off on one side or the other. This occurred to me in reading what you tell me.

Did you notice again in Marcus's letter a hint of his desire to learn Greek? . . . .

* He was at this time President of Westphalia.

CCCXXIX.

BERLIN, 18*th March*, 1825.

It gives me a peculiar satisfaction to read what is frequently asserted at the present day, that the rate of mortality is much diminished as compared to former times. Formerly I refused to believe in it, because it is certainly hard to understand. Now that I have children, I am too much interested in the question not to believe it.

I sent off my letter to the King yesterday. As I wrote the date at the end, my father's birthday, I felt quite clear that he would have disapproved of this step, had he been living. Entirely without ambition for himself, he would have wished me to yield in all points not involving a positive violation of my conscience, rather than give up the possibility of attaining a brilliant position. The remembrance of this has not, however, in the least confused my perceptions; the propriety of my step admits of no doubt. I have requested the King's permission to leave in either of two cases: first, that if the Commission communicate the bill to me, I may leave as soon as I have made my report to the King; secondly, that if I hear they have sent in their report direct to the King, that I may leave as soon as my connexion with the Commission is dissolved. I think that he will grant this without difficulty. But I have further said that I regard it as my duty to lay before His Majesty a final expression of my opinions on the project, and predictions of its consequences.

I dined to-day with the Crown Prince as usual after the Council of State, and was some time alone with him afterwards. . . . .

The English newspaper is a sort of luxury,* but it is not a mere luxury; and it is always a pity to break off any study in which you have acquired a certain degree of proficiency. Thus, I am very sorry not to have gone on

* Niebuhr had commissioned his wife to order an English newspaper, saying, "If I quite leave off reading English papers, I shall lose my knowledge of England."

with Persian and Arabic. . . . . Tell Brandis that Cousin is on very intimate terms with Hegel, which is indeed partly owing to Hegel's interposition in his favour during his captivity. Still it is somewhat extraordinary. Ask Brandis if he ever, when in Paris, heard such strange expressions as the following fall from him; that the gradual formation of Christianity had commenced from the earliest ages, but that Judaism was not its historical source;—that Christ himself knew very little of Christianity; the system was completed in the seventh and following centuries;—that the Reformers were quite in error in desiring to go back to the first centuries, in which religion had not yet attained its maturity;—that Hegel perceived this, but that the rest of us did not, &c. In this way these gentlemen may come to a compromise with Catholicism. Such cloudy utterances from a Frenchman disgust me. Among us Germans they are not quite unheard-of.

CCCXXX.

BERLIN, 22*nd March*, 1825.

. . . . I, too, like to think of Bonn as our future place of abode, and am persuaded that we could not have a better lot. I mean to try to enter into the local interests of the place. By so doing you identify yourself more closely with the inhabitants. Besides, it is a necessity of my nature to concern myself with the weal and woe of those who belong to the same community as myself.

I rejoice in the idea that our garden will furnish me with an occupation that is neither literary, political, nor administrative—that sort of interest which has been so completely out of my reach ever since my childhood, and had become so foreign to me, that I did not believe I should ever be so happy as to experience it again. It is a great blessing that my health continues so remarkably good; though it is the case with me, as with sickly children who attain to a permanent state of health; I feel myself much less intellectual than at the period when every impression made itself felt through my whole nature, physical as well as moral.

Marcus's affectionate disposition shows itself in his expressions about Göschen and Lieber in his letters. I cannot imagine how he should have recollected Lieber's birthday.

It had been said that Lieber was to be released on his father's birthday,* but nothing has come of it. Such carelessness in leaving a good man to languish in fetters makes me indignant, though no cruelty is intended. . . . .

CCCXXXI.

BERLIN, *2nd April.*

. . . . I wrote to poor Lieber, and he has sent me an answer that has touched me deeply. The poor fellow is quite broken-hearted; I wish I could find time to make an excursion to Köpenick and comfort him. Perhaps, I shall be able on Monday.†

I am glad to hear that the people will receive my lectures kindly, only they must not carry their kindness too far. It is my earnest wish that none of the professors, &c., should attend the course. . . . .

CCCXXXII.

BERLIN, 11*th April*, 1824.

This morning I have at last finished my final application to the King. To write thus for the fourth time about the same thing, and each time to have to answer the same objections over again is very wearying; you cannot invent new arguments when you have once exhausted the subject in your representations. You can only try to put it in new points of view from which it may appear somewhat clearer, more self-evident. . . . .

I have still yet to write to Schuckmann for poor Lieber. In the evening I shall take leave of the dear Crown Prince. . . . .

* He had been arrested on suspicion of belonging to a secret association.

† In the following letter, dated 6th, Niebuhr says, "I visited poor Lieber yesterday, in the Bastile of Köpenick, Oh my God!"

1825—1831.

We now enter on the last, and for posterity, the most important section of Niebuhr's life, if we except, perhaps, the three years of his professorship in Berlin. From his letters, it has been seen already that he had determined to deliver lectures at the University, though holding no official appointment there. His freedom from other occupations and cares, enabled him at last seriously to undertake the accomplishment of the promise given to his Amelia, and continue his Roman History. He returned to the vocation, which had in his youth floated before him as the true ideal of his life, namely, the position of a public instructor; and found ample opportunity to redeem the vow he had made in his early years, to extend guidance and assistance to any young men who might hereafter encounter the same intellectual difficulties through which he had had to work his own way.

Niebuhr commenced his lectures with a course on the History of Greece after the battle of Chæronea, and had a numerous audience. This course was followed by others, on Roman Antiquities, in the winter of 1825, repeated in 1827,—Ancient History, in the summer of 1826,—Ancient Ethnography and Geography, in the winter of 1827,—the History of Rome to the Fall of the Empire, in the winter of 1828,—the History of the last Forty Years, and of Rome under the Emperors, in the summer of 1829,—and a second course on the History of Rome, in the summer of 1830.

We have seen that, at Berlin, Niebuhr delivered his lectures verbatim from written notes. At Bonn, on the contrary, his only preparation consisted in meditating for a short time on the subject of his lecture, and referring to authorities for his data, when he found it necessary, and he brought no written notes with him to the lecture-room. His success in imparting his ideas varied greatly at different times, as it depended almost entirely on his mental and physical condition at the moment. He always felt a certain difficulty in expressing himself. He grasped his subject as a whole, and it was not easy to him to retrace the steps by which he had arrived at his results. Hence his style was harsh and often disjointed; and yet he possessed a species of eloquence whose value is of a high order,—that of making the expression the exact reflection of the thought,—that of embodying each separate idea in an adequate, but not redundant form. The discourse was no dry, impersonal statement of facts and arguments, or even opinions; the whole man, with his conceptions, feelings, moral sentiments, nay passions too, was mirrored forth in it. Hence Niebuhr not merely informed and stimulated the minds of his hearers, but attracted their affections. That he did this in an eminent degree, was not indeed owing to his lectures alone, but also to his kind and generous conduct. All who deserved it were sure of his sympathy and assistance, whether oppressed by intellectual difficulties, or pecuniary cares. During the first year, he delivered his lectures without remuneration; afterwards, on its being represented to him that this would be injurious to other professors,

who could not afford to do the same, he consented to take fees, but employed them in assisting poor scholars and founding prizes. He often, however, still remitted the fee privately, when he perceived that a young man could not well afford it, and never took any from friends.

But those who were admitted to his domestic circle were the class most deeply indebted to him. His interest in all subjects of scientific or moral importance was always lively; and it was impossible to be in his company without deriving some accession of knowledge and incentive to good. From his associates, he only required a warm and pure heart and a sincere love of knowledge, with a freedom from affectation or arrogance. Where he found these, he willingly adapted himself to the wants and capacities of his companions; would receive objections mildly, and take pains to answer them, even when urged by mere youths, and weigh carefully every new idea presented to him. He was fond of society, and while his irritability not seldom gave rise to slight misunderstandings and even temporary estrangements in the circle of his acquaintance, there were some friends with whom he always remained on terms of unbroken intimacy, among whom may be named Professors Brandis, Arndt, Nitzsch, Bleek, Näke, Welcker, and Hollweg. He enjoyed wit in others, and in his lighter moods racy and pointed sayings escaped him not unfrequently.

His intercourse was not confined to literary circles. In all the civil affairs of the town and neighbourhood, he took an active interest from principle as well as inclination, for he considered a man as no good

citizen who refused to take his share of the public business of the neighbourhood in which he lived; and the loss which left so great a blank in the world of letters, was also deeply regretted by his fellow-townsmen of Bonn.

Niebuhr's mode of life at Bonn was very regular, and his habits simple. He hated show and unnecessary luxury in domestic life. He loved art in her proper place, but could not bear to see her degraded into the mere minister of outward ease. His life in his own family showed the erroneousness of the assertion that a thorough devotion to learning is inconsistent with the claims of family affection. He liked to hear of all the little household occurrences, and his sympathy was as ready for the little sorrows of his children as for the misfortunes of a nation. He was in the habit of rising at seven in the morning, and retiring at eleven. At the simple one o'clock dinner, he generally conversed cheerfully upon the contents of the newspapers which he had just looked through. The conversation was usually continued during the walk which he took immediately afterwards. The building of a house, or the planting of a garden, had always an attraction for him, and he used to watch the measuring of a wall, or the breaking open of an entrance, with the same species of interest with which he observed the development of a political organisation. The family drank tea at eight o'clock, when any of his acquaintance were always welcome. But during the hours spent in his library, his whole being was absorbed in his studies, and hence he got through an immense amount of work in an incredibly short time.

The principal epochs of his life, from 1823 to the beginning of 1830, were marked by the works in which he was engaged. In October, 1825, he began to work again regularly at the History of Rome. It was his intention to finish the outline of the third volume up to the end of the first Punic war, and to conclude it with three treatises on the primitive metrical art of the Romans, on their religion, and on their ancient manners and customs. He thought it impossible to attempt the final revision and publication of the third volume until the two former ones were finished, on account of the references to them. This plan he did not live to carry out; it was reserved for the friendship of his disciple and friend Professor Classen to revise the manuscript of the third volume for the press. The second edition of the first volume was finished in the summer of 1826, exactly as Niebuhr completed his fiftieth year. It had cost him great labour, for he had thought it necessary to alter the arrangement so considerably, and to re-write so many passages, that it was substantially a new work. His literary conscientiousness led him not seldom to sacrifice favourite passages, because they did not quite correspond to his riper convictions, or disturbed the symmetry of the proportions. But above all, he was most careful to express the exact degree of confidence which he felt with regard to each of his assertions.

The reception which his work met with, not only in Germany, where half the copies of the new edition were ordered before the last sheets had left the press, but also in foreign countries, caused him great delight.

Even from Boston, U.S., he received an enthusiastic review of his History and an academical diploma, a most unexpected honour to him as coming from that quarter. Various applications were made to him by booksellers and literary men in France and England, who were desirous of obtaining his sanction and assistance in the translation of the work. The latter he readily granted, sometimes at the cost of considerable interruption to his other occupations. Niebuhr was not easily satisfied; the care with which he wrote rendered it the more annoying to him, when the exact sense and colour of his thoughts had not been preserved, or when, in the attempt to do so, the genius of a foreign language was violated, and thus the impression which he wished to produce destroyed. He, however, considered the translation executed by Hare and Thirlwall, at the expense of the university of Cambridge, a more perfectly successful attempt than he had even thought possible.

About this time, Niebuhr undertook the joint editorship, with Brandis and Hasse, of the "Rheinisches Museum," a periodical for jurisprudence, philology, and the history of philosophy.

In February, 1826, he established, with Brandis and a few others, a philological society, similar to that which had afforded him so many pleasant hours in Berlin in the years 1810 and 1811. During this year, he was much depressed by the defeat of the Greeks, whose struggle he had watched with his usual ardent sympathy in human welfare, and also by the death of Voss, the last of his friends belonging to the former

generation. On the other hand, he was reminded of all that he still possessed in his friends by the visits of M. von Stein, Professor Falk, M. Pertz from Hanover, and several others. Most of the foreigners too who came to Bonn visited him. He had, in particular, so many connexions with England, that scarcely any Englishman of note came unprovided with letters of introduction to him. The number of these casual visitors caused him serious interruption to his studies. In this year, the present King of Prussia, then Crown Prince, visited the Rhine repeatedly. His presence was always a source of real gratification to Niebuhr, who still preserved the affection for him, and high esteem for his character, which he had formed when the Prince was his pupil in Berlin.

The winter of 1826-27 was passed in laborious and cheerful application to his studies. He succeeded in obtaining a dispensation from attendance on the sittings of the Council of State, but, at the request of this body, prepared a report for the Westphalian Chambers on the establishment of a projected Bank. In the beginning of the year 1827, he commenced the revision of the second volume of the Roman History, and soon found that it would be necessary entirely to re-write this portion also, containing the period down to the decemviral constitution. In addition to this work, he drew up a prospectus for a new edition of the Byzantine Historians for the publisher Weber in Bonn, of which he edited the Agathias himself, besides superintending the progress of the whole undertaking. Niebuhr always rejoiced in being able to further such schemes, both for

the sake of the literary objects which he thus promoted, and because it gave him the opportunity of exciting and aiding others to similar pursuits. In a short time a third edition of the first volume was required; in this he had comparatively little to alter, but here also he made additions, particularly with respect to the history of the primitive races, of Alba, the Luceres, the election of consuls, &c. It was printed in the autumn of this year. Towards the end of the summer, Professor Twesten, of Kiel, paid a visit to Niebuhr, accompanied by his wife, who was a cousin of Madame Niebuhr, and had been one of her earliest friends. Twesten had also been a pupil of Niebuhr's in Berlin, and one in whom he had always felt a particular interest. Excepting his sister, who had visited him in 1825, he had seen none of his relations since 1816. This was the first renewal of personal intercourse with them, and gave rise in his mind to the resolution of taking a journey to Holstein. Up to this time, he seems to have dreaded the impression which the recollection of former times would make upon him, but after he had once decided on the journey, he eagerly rejoiced in the prospect of revisiting the home of his youth, and thus linking together the present and the past.

In the winter of 1827-28, M. Classen, of Hamburgh, (now Professor in Lubeck,) entered Niebuhr's family as tutor to Marcus, and a very warm friendship rapidly sprang up between him and Niebuhr. In letters to his intimate friends, Niebuhr often expresses his satisfaction in having secured such an instructor for Marcus, and his own pleasure in Classen's society. Classen con-

tinued to reside in the family till the death of Niebuhr; he watched over his dying bed, and superintended the education of his orphan son with the utmost care and affection. It was Classen, too, who prepared the third volume of the History of Rome for the press, which Niebuhr left in a half-finished state. In the spring of 1828, Niebuhr had the great pleasure of receiving a visit from his friend and successor in Rome, Chevalier Bunsen.

The increasing ill-health of Madame Niebuhr during this winter, threatened to put a stop to the projected journey to Holstein, but she improved as the spring advanced, and in May the whole family set out for Kiel. There they passed the summer in the house of Madame Hensler, and surrounded by their friends, whom they had not seen for twelve years. The time was spent in happy social intercourse and excursions into the beautiful scenery of that part of Holstein. On such occasions, Niebuhr was always the centre of a group of children, who had soon discovered the willingness with which he entered into all their amusements, and his inability to refuse them any gratification. One fortnight he devoted to a visit to Copenhagen, in company with his son and Twesten. He was gratified by the evident signs of increasing wealth in his country, but the growing luxury and love of amusement disturbed him. He writes—"Every one must allow that the population of Holstein equals that of any province of Germany in cultivation and intelligence, though it is subject to many disadvantages from its position on the outer edge of literary Germany. What struck me

most, in my last visit to Kiel, is the sort of Viennese life I remarked there, *où l'on s'acquitte consciencieusement du devoir qu'on s'est imposé de s'amuser.*"

The following account of the last year of Niebuhr's life is from the pen of his friend Professor Classen, from whose essay on "Niebuhr's Life and Sphere of Action in Bonn" * many of the facts in the former part of this section are derived :—

"The peace of Niebuhr's life in Bonn was broken by the storms of the year 1830; first came the personal calamity that his new house, in the arrangement of which he had taken so much pleasure, was burnt down in the night of the 6th of February; and before order and comfort could be created afresh from the ruins of his domestic existence, the news arrived of the second French revolution. The former misfortune affected him deeply, for he found his dearest happiness in the peace and order of home; but his noble nature was beautifully displayed on the night of the fire. As soon as he had recovered from the first fearful shock, and had seen his wife and children safe in the house of a kind neighbour, he compared the weight of this blow to other events of his life, and said, sadly, but with composure, to a friend, 'It is indeed a misfortune, but I do not feel nearly so overcome and depressed as I did in the night after the battle of Bautzen, when I was near head-quarters, and believed the cause of my country to be, if not lost, in the most imminent peril. If only the manuscript of the second volume of my

* Lebensnachrichten, vol. iii., p. 283.

Roman History is found again, I can get over everything else; and, at the worst, I feel I have still power enough left to replace my History, and will set to work again with God's help, in a few days.' He conversed thus for some hours with noble calmness, while watching the flames as they devoured their rich booty. Once only he enquired anxiously after the fate of the She-wolf, a beautiful cast of the well-known group in the Capitol, which had been given him by his wife, and always stood in his library, and expressed the strongest desire that it might be saved; he had always liked to consider it as the guardian genius of the house. Some of his younger friends hurried into the burning house, reached the room, and with much difficulty brought away the heavy cast; but in the hasty descent of the staircase, it received several blows, and reached the bottom in ruins. Niebuhr buried the fragments with melancholy feelings in his garden.

"For the first few days after the fire, the sight of the desolation it had caused, rendered his regret more poignant than it had been in the first moment. He was especially grieved by the destruction, as he feared, of his library; for all his books had been thrown out of the windows of the second story in a heap on the snow and mud of the street, and had not been placed under shelter till the morning. It cost him many days' labour to look through what was saved, and bring it into order; but there was great rejoicing when here and there a precious treasure was found again which had been looked on as lost; and the re-appearance of the longed-for manuscript of the second volume was

greeted with hearty cheers: only a few sheets written out ready for the press were missing, the sketch of the whole had been preserved entire. It was scarcely less than miraculous that his loss in books turned out after all to be very slight; many indeed were more or less injured. Many papers and letters were gone, among the rest his correspondence with his father.

"A new house was soon taken, while the other one was rebuilt on an enlarged scale. In the prospect of a speedy change, Niebuhr endured the confinement of the new and necessarily hasty household arrangements with unruffled cheerfulness; still he could not feel quite at ease in them, and the recollection of his misfortune, combined with his fears for its effects on the health of his beloved wife, rendered him no doubt more than usually susceptible to gloomy impressions. It was in this mood that he first heard the news of the Three Days of July, news which would have affected him most profoundly under whatever circumstances they had first reached him. For few of his contemporaries took such deep and constant interest in all the events of the day,—few had the same power of appreciating all their bearings and consequences. In such a mind as his, this was naturally not the result of fluctuating curiosity, nor the want of a passing amusement, but of a thorough comprehension of the antecedents and tendencies of his age, as far as such can be possessed by one individual. And he now saw himself most bitterly deceived—disappointed in all his hopes and expectations; he had never given the court party credit for such blindness, nor believed the people of Paris capable of such resistance,

whether it may have been the consequence of momentary excitement, or of a concerted plan. Enough—the revolution had taken place, and brought in its train many violent changes, while it threatened to spread the sphere of its activity to other countries. But however much he might be distracted and saddened, during the five months in which he was still a spectator of the world's history, by the feverish convulsions of the age, and yet more by the strife of opinions as to their real significance, he never failed to recognise with perfect clearness and distinctness in the universal confusion, which evil was in truth the lesser; never wavered in his attachment to his country and his King, but exerted himself on every opportunity to awaken and invigorate the patriotism of those around him.

"The last political occurrence in which Niebuhr was strongly interested, was the trial of the ministers of Charles the Tenth; it was indirectly the cause of his death. He read the reports in the French journals with eager attention; and as these newspapers were much in request at that time, from the universal interest felt in their contents, he did not in general go to the public reading-rooms where he was accustomed to see the papers daily, until the evening. On Christmas Eve and the following day, he was in better health and spirits than he had been for a long while, but on the evening of the 25th of December, he spent a considerable time waiting and reading in the hot news-room, without taking off his thick fur cloak, and then returned home through the bitter frosty night air, heated in mind and body. Still full of the impression made on him by

the papers, he went straight to Classen's room, and exclaimed, 'That is true eloquence! You must read Sauzet's speech; he alone declares the true state of the case; that this is no question of law, but an open battle between hostile powers! Sauzet must be no common man! But,' he added immediately, 'I have taken a severe chill, I must go to bed.' And from the couch which he then sought, he never rose again, except for one hour, two days afterwards, when he was forced to return to it quickly, with warning symptoms of his approaching end.

"His illness lasted a week, and was pronounced, on the fourth day, to be a decided attack of inflammation on the lungs. His hopes sank at first, but rose with his increasing danger and weakness; even on the morning of the last day he said, 'I may still recover.' Two days before, his faithful wife, who had exerted herself beyond her strength in nursing him, fell ill and was obliged to leave him. He then turned his face to the wall, and exclaimed with the most painful presentiment, 'Hapless house! To lose father and mother at once!' And to the children he said, 'Pray to God, children! He alone can help us!' And his attendants saw that he himself was seeking comfort and strength in silent prayer. But when his hopes of life revived, his active and powerful mind soon demanded its wonted occupation. The studies that had been dearest to him through life, remained so in death; his love to them was proved to be pure and genuine by its unwavering perseverance to the last. While he was on his sick bed, Classen read aloud to him for hours the Greek text of the Jewish

History of Josephus, and he followed the sense with such ease and attention, that he suggested several emendations in the text at the moment; this may be called an unimportant circumstance, but it always appeared to us one of the most wonderful proofs of his mental powers. The last learned work in which he was able to testify his interest, was the description of Rome by Bunsen and his friends, which had just been sent to him; the preface to the first volume was read aloud to him, and called forth expressions of pleasure and approbation. He also asked for light reading to pass the time, but our attempts to satisfy him were unsuccessful. A friend proposed the 'Briefe eines Verstorbenen,' which was then making a great sensation; but he declined it, saying he feared that its levity would jar upon his feelings. One of Cooper's novels was recommended to him, and excited his ridicule by its extraordinary verbiage: he was much amused by trying an experiment he proposed, which consisted in taking one period at hap-hazard on each page; and by the discovery that this mode of reading did little violence to the connexion of the story. The 'Colnishe Zeitung' was read aloud to him up to the last day, with extracts from the French and other journals. He asked for them expressly, only twelve hours before his death, and gave his opinion half in jest about the change of ministry in Paris. But on the afternoon of the 1st of January, 1831, he sank into a dreamy slumber; once on awakening, he said that pleasant images floated before him in sleep: now and then he spoke French in his dreams; probably he felt himself in the presence of his departed friend De Serre.

As the night gathered, consciousness gradually faded away; he woke up once more about midnight, when the last remedy was administered; he recognised in it a medicine of doubtful operation, never resorted to but in extreme cases, and said in a faint voice, 'What essential substance is this? Am I so far gone?' These were his last words; he sank back on his pillow, and within an hour his noble heart had ceased to beat."

Niebuhr's wife died nine days after him, on the 11th of the same month, about the same hour of the night. She died, in fact, of a broken heart, though her disease was, like his, an inflammation of the chest. She could shed no tears, though she longed for them, and prayed God to send them; once her eyes grew moist, when his picture was brought to her at her own request, but they dried again, and her heavy heart was not relieved. She had her children often with her, particularly her son, and gave them her parting counsels. And so her loving and pure soul went home to God. Both rest in one grave, over which the present King of Prussia has erected a monument to the memory of his former instructor and counsellor. The children were placed under the care of Madame Hensler, at Kiel.

Letters from May, 1825, to December, 1830.

CCCXXXIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, 12*th May*, 1825.

. . . . I have begun the course of lectures I announced, and succeed very well in delivering them extempore, by which the labour I have undertaken will be comparatively

inconsiderable; in fact, I am quite certain that I shall be able henceforward to continue the Roman History at the same time with my lectures, and to give Marcus lessons for at least an hour and a half each day. Yesterday 298 persons inscribed their names as hearers; there were not, indeed, so many present, because there was literally not room for them in the Lecture-hall; many stood, and the windows had to be taken out that we might not be suffocated. This throng may very likely, nay, will almost certainly, diminish by degrees; still, it is quite clear that the young men receive my course with real gratitude as a friendly gift, and that many of the Professors regard me as a welcome fellow-worker; the citizens also seem pleased that I have chosen to live amongst them.

The purchase-deed of our garden will be signed in a few days, and if we can find a house for sale in the neighbourhood of the garden, that suits us, or that can be made suitable by a few additions, we shall certainly take advantage of it. Bad as the state of the world is in many respects, it is still an inestimable advantage to be able to recover energy and inclination to settle yourself, and make purchases for the rest of one's life; and in our own house, under our own trees, we shall be contented to let alone what we cannot alter, and what would not be improved by most of those who want to alter it. You likewise can remember the time before the commotions of the world had banished the quiet of private domestic life; when the laying out of a garden and the success of a plantation was an important event to the head of a household and his friends. I have still a very lively recollection of those tranquil days, and how they passed away so entirely that I did not believe they would ever return during our lifetime. But they seem to have returned as it were in the progress of convalescence. I am far from being the only one who is more interested in the question, whether and how our town shall and can be enlarged, and the neighbourhood improved, than in the affairs of the world;—if only they would not exterminate the Greeks!

Our garden occupies an old bastion and part of a curtain, so that it seems to be on a hill, and has a view of the Sieben Gebirge, and the range of the so-called Vorgebirge, and the magnificent Poppelsdorf Allée. It is full of beautiful fruit trees and vines, which are the more valuable here, as the grapes ripen well and early, if the season is tolerable and the aspect favourable, and good grapes are rarely to be had in the market. From being laid out on a bastion, the lines of division in the garden have acquired a certain peculiarity which could hardly have been obtained by art. We are about to replace dead trees by new ones, and are tranquilly planting what will take years before it will produce anything. Why have you not enjoyed this heavenly spring in our garden, dear Dora? . . . .

CCCXXXIV.

12th June, 1825.

. . . . . I continue to receive encouragement in my lectures. . . . . The attentive investigation of the history of these obscure periods is interesting to myself, and profitable as a preparation for the period of the Roman History when that of Macedon falls into it. Indeed, when I have finished the third volume, and revised the first, I think I should like, by way of change, to dictate the history of Greece, which I am now delivering, in quite a different form, not as a learned work. The course of lectures which I mean to deliver this winter on Roman Antiquities, will be useful to me in the revision of my history. Whether it will also be useful to a large number among my auditors—I do not know; but my trouble will certainly not be quite lost. The young man who gives Marcus lessons, and is our companion at table, is one of those who receive what I say with affectionate interest; and, according to his testimony, there are many who do so among the great number of young philologists who are rising up here on all sides, where a few years ago, out of a hundred thousand souls, there was not one who understood Greek. I have defended Demosthenes, upon full conviction, as warmly as if the question concerned a living man, and

the young men listened to me with evident sympathy. I never before saw Demosthenes' greatness and excellence in such a striking light.

The University here is much decried abroad, as if we lived under Heaven knows what tyranny of the police, and as if the young men were turning Catholics by shoals. Both reports are quite untrue; no one meets with any molestation unless he commit some great extravagance; and there is no danger of conversion to Catholicism except when a young man falls in love in a proselyting family. But there are very few such. . . . .

CCCXXXV.

BONN, *20th October*, 1825.

I have been ill since I wrote to you. It was a rheumatic pleurisy, fortunately not violent, but I was quite confined to my bed for four days.

You ask after the continuation of my History, dearest Dora. I should have resumed it this summer,—the lectures would not have interfered with it to any extent,—but Gretchen's journey to the baths stood in the way; I was obliged to devote myself more than usual to the children, who were left behind. On this account I was unable to set to work, and I have only begun the continuation during the present month. The lectures this winter will be no hindrance to me, still the work will advance but slowly. I am satisfied on the whole with what I have done latterly. Life is stirring among the heap of dry bones, and I feel while writing the history, as if I were borrowing it from some newly-discovered old records. I may, however, very likely be censured for going too much into details. Another circumstance will give still more occasion for blame. In the first half of the unprinted volume I invented a speech; I have now composed a second, and the outline of one in reply to it. I know beforehand all the cavils that will be made against this; but I know as well as any one, what is essential to a living representation of the past, and that it is not possible to enter into the way in which decisive

resolutions are formed in critical moments, unless the reader can look into the souls of those who conceive or influence the decision, not through the help of common-places, but by means of a thorough insight into all the special circumstances of the case. Such speeches as those, of which Thucydides has given us the highest model, are truly the lamps of history; I grant that a man must be bold, and free from superstitious scrupulosity, to invent them for periods concerning which only scanty fragments of *facta* are left. The ancient historians have too often treated moral and political common-places in this form, and such passages are indeed absolutely worthless. When I have finished the first Punic war, I shall write three essays, for the same volume, upon the earliest metrical art of the Romans, on their religion, and on their ancient manners and customs; and then I shall proceed, not without trembling, to the revision of the first volume. The materials for additions are extremely rich; and as I now see clearly what I only divined, or had a presentiment of, when I wrote it, I shall be obliged to take it to pieces almost throughout, and erect the old portions, combined with new ones, into a more extensive structure. I shall thank God, if I live to finish at least this much of my task, for then I shall have accomplished the restoration of a history that was almost universally misunderstood, even so early as 1800 years ago. The taking of Alexandria by Augustus is the limit to which I propose to bring it down; this I still hope to reach. . . . . .

CCCXXXVI.

TO PERTHÈS.

BONN, *7th March*, 1826.

. . . . I wish, dear Perthès, that you knew any one who had as extensive a knowledge of the history of commerce during the past century as my late friend Büsch, that you might prevail upon him to write the history of commerce and finance during the last hundred and fifty years. I know a great deal about it myself in a fragmentary way, but not connectedly. Even for those who have not that

strong interest in monetary affairs which I am not ashamed of confessing, they form as essential a part of the world's history as the history of epidemics. Before 1721, no universal commercial crisis had been known; they are now become more and more frequent, and it is enough to make one shudder to think of the future, when a chain of credit-giving establishments will extend through the whole of Spanish America, as well as through the United States. Truly the independence of these States opens an abyss; the natural arrangement would have been that Europe should have traded with these countries through the medium of an emporium such as Cadiz. However, of what use is it to know this? The old order of things is fast passing away, through the fault of those who were its rightful heads, and who would have been the first gainers by it, if they had known how to maintain it. The counter-revolution in France opens gloomy prospects to Germany likewise. In our provinces, the oligarchy have carried out their plans respecting the elections by deceiving the Government, and are aiming at Jesuitism and the like. If Russia were out of the question, one need feel less anxiety about the matter; for that party cannot obtain any permanent success.

You are quite right in maintaining that neither the gymnastic nor the Mennonite *régime* can conduce to a real and noble respect for the laws. I believe that every system of training which inspires heathen or Christian arrogance, and leads people to consider themselves as privileged individuals, has an equally corrupting effect.

How is your series of histories proceeding? Shall you carry it out? My wife is again very sickly; the children, too, are not free from indisposition. As for myself, since I have at least twenty years to live (for it is not the fashion here to die before seventy), I am striving to make up in creative labours and enjoyment of life, for what I have lost in both during the best years of my life.

CCCXXXVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *19th March*, 1826.

I have now concluded my lectures with the reward of very decisive approbation. The lectures close very early here, and I, with a few others, have continued them some days after the courses of the regular professors had concluded, and have had a respectable though much diminished audience. The numbers had kept up, in general, during the winter beyond my expectation. Brandis, D'Alton, and several other professors, were among my hearers. My lectures were received with uncommon interest among the students, although they are accustomed here, in general, to dictation, and require it; and their expressions of thanks and attachment quite surprised me. One young man, as I gave him his certificate, put into my hand, with great embarrassment, a letter of thanks; seized my hand, and said he could never thank me enough; I had awakened a new life in him. Most of those who have been thus aroused, are Catholics, on whom a new life is indeed breaking, through the study of the sciences, from which they have been so long excluded, and I trust they will diffuse it over a wide sphere. Their abilities, moreover, as well as their dispositions, are of a very encouraging character. It is certainly incontestable that philology now stands many degrees higher than it did thirty years ago. The knowledge, which then distinguished the few who possessed it, is now become common property.

The idea of standing at the head of a school will not allure me; on this point I know myself; though with the present state of party feeling in Germany, it is almost necessary as a matter of self-defence; and if our disciples and adherents enter the lists with our opponents, we need not hold them back. I have met with some cases of this kind already among persons who are strangers to me. The revision of the first volume involves immense labour. . . . .

CCCXXXVIII.

BONN, 24*th April*, 1826.

. . . . I have been much affected by the death of old Voss. He was the last remaining one of the elder generation with whom the memories of my childhood and youth were bound up: I felt myself still young, so long as I knew, and might yet see one living person whom I had seen as a boy, and to whom, as a youth, I had looked up with affection. It was not without some anxiety that I went to visit him on my journey hither three years ago. Christiana had more than once written me word, that he had inquired if I had not turned Catholic! And this, be it remarked, after I had set up a Protestant chapel in my house! I felt angry at such a suspicion, besides, the Stolberg affair had left a deep wound behind, as was the case with you likewise. But the memory of old times prevailed, and I found that it was necessary with him too, not to overlook the palliating circumstances,—that there were excuses for much that had passed after the first step. I felt as much affection as ever for my aged friend, whose freshness of mind had something uncommonly venerable about it. I have written to him several times since, and his answers were very cordial. The last time I wrote to him was on his birthday, and those about him tell me that this was almost the last lively gratification that he enjoyed. He intended to pay us a visit this summer, and this project was almost the last thing of which he spoke. I should have gone to see him in the holidays if he had lived. He had already fallen asleep when I fixed my intentions.

Events have justified his predictions in many things about which he was not, properly speaking, in the right, and still less a prophet. A league such as he believed in, was a fevered dream; but things are happening now, and others are impending, which are exactly what he indicated as the work of this assumed league. It requires much historical experience and resignation to retain one's equanimity in spite of all that is passing before our eyes; the influence of the bigoted, monkish, in fact, downright jesuitical, party

among the Catholics, in matters of public instruction, is most sad. I could, perhaps, bring on a crisis if I were to write on the subject, but the result is too uncertain. This is a more dangerous business than the alleged favouritism shown towards the hereditary aristocracy, which may produce ill effects for a generation, but cannot have any permanent consequences. It is indeed clear, I think, that the commoner is regarded by the nobleman with a dislike such as has not existed before for the last forty years. The misfortune is, that this feeling enfeebles the whole of Germany, and particularly our class, which is the sinews of the country. France is also growing very weary, and there, where the political volcano seems to have spent itself, the priests are creating fresh elements of combustion. . . . .

I went to Elberfeldt by the diligence last week, and returned by way of Düsseldorf, where I visited the "Tanten Jacobi."* It did me good, only it was not enough. Elberfeldt is, as you probably know, the seat of the Protestant fanatics. I heard such a sermon! it happened to be the general fast-day. But I was told there was another which would have given us something still more outrageous.

The men of business there are clever and energetic. It is a real pleasure to see how new firms and new enterprises are constantly coming into existence just as in England. The whole duchy of Berg presents this cheerful aspect. New roads are making in all directions, and rows of houses springing up along them. Manufactures are in a most flourishing condition.

CCCXXXIX.

BONN, 21*st May*, 1826.

. . . . The horrible fate of Missolonghi almost deadens my feelings both to immediate and more distant objects of interest. Without attaching full credence to the reports of success, I had lulled myself into security, and the blow came upon me this time quite unexpectedly. I cannot

* The sisters of the philosopher Jacobi.

divert my thoughts from it. Marcus, who is only just beginning to turn his attention to political events, is quite broken-hearted. He wanted to employ his savings'-box for the subscription, and, uniting the ideas of a child with the earnestness of a man, proposed to melt his leaden soldiers into bullets. From the time that the first rumour of the lamentable disaster had reached us, he could not bear to look at the map of Turkey. Amelia studies maps with him, and gets him to tell her about the places; *this* map he imploringly refused to tell her about; and when she innocently laughed at him for it, he threw himself on my breast, sobbing bitterly. Alas, what hope is now left! The heroes are gone, the Suliots are exterminated, and how horrible to think of the women and children in the power of these barbarians. What can the too long delayed assistance avail now? England has played a detestable part. My old affection for her is well nigh extinguished. And yet when England is fallen, who knows but what we may bitterly feel the want of her hereafter?

My whole attention is fixed on the proceedings of the Catholics. It seems to me unquestionable that a bold faction among them are secretly aiming to bring on a religious war. In France, the priests have been directing all their efforts, for the last ten years, to the attainment of physical power, and they have already succeeded in recovering their hold on the populace; and this whilst they had no means of constraint at their disposal. The prospect that we Protestants may need a Russian Gustavus Adolphus to defend us is frightful. I was relating to Marcus yesterday the history of the religious wars and their horrors. I was glad to see that he distinguished between the bad Catholics and the good ones, such as our friends, who would never have acted so; and also that he did not understand at all how Protestants could persecute. He thought that would be impossible, for they knew that the Catholics were in error, and you could not hate a person for being mistaken. Our Catholic friends are, indeed, only separated from ourselves by forms; while treated as heretics by the fanatics,

they are quite intimate with us, and the most intelligent man among them said to me yesterday, "superstition is, after all, much more detestable and mischievous than unbelief." . . . .

CCCXL.

BONN, 21*st June*, 1826.

The printing of the first volume in the new edition has at last commenced, and will now advance steadily. . . . .

My French translator was here, the end of last week. At all events, he understands German perfectly, and goes to work with great enthusiasm. According to his testimony, expectation is universally excited about it in France, and the publisher is so certain of a brilliant reception, that he will print at least two thousand copies. Such a celebrity among foreign nations is very agreeable to the natural man, philosophise about it as you please; and I least of all make pretensions to be a saint in this respect, or even a philosopher.

Fifteen years ago, I had no idea of the possibility of appearing as an author, although I had a very distinct feeling of the worthlessness of that which called itself ancient history; and when I began my lectures at Berlin, under the animating influence of your presence, I never dreamt that they could become the basis of an enduring work. When I see how the ideas which began to dawn upon me in the course of the lectures, have gradually become as clear as day; how the chaos has been resolved into distinct facts—nay, separate details—it is astonishing even to myself. But it really borders upon a miraculous intervention of Providence, that so many remarkable things have been brought to light within the last few years, which were indispensable to the determination of certain points.

My Frenchman gave me a good deal of interesting information respecting the internal condition of his country, agreeing with what an attentive reader may gather from the journals. The pretensions of the priests, who are for the

most part utterly uneducated men from the lowest classes, have produced an exasperation against them, which has called forth a party capable of setting them at defiance, notwithstanding the patronage of the King. It is singular how the various parties unite in their common opposition to the clergy, so that people who thought themselves unalterably embittered against each other in politics, five years ago, are now quite reconciled. This, indeed, has been only rendered possible by the fact that, thank God, the revolutionary plans of the liberals have been frustrated. For I quite understand how, in France, men whose views fully harmonise with my own, can become reconciled to those whose earlier follies have wrought such indescribable calamity. I have just the same feelings; and would not only send my respects to Royer-Collard, but if Fox were living, should be happy to make his acquaintance.

The sentiments of the English, as a nation, with regard to the Greek cause, are undisguisedly bad. An Austrian is not answerable for the acts of his government, but the English are answerable for uttering no expression of commiseration, no cry for help, when there was nothing to prevent them. It is quite different in France; there, tones have resounded in the public journals that have issued from the depths of the heart, and find an echo in the inmost heart of the reader. Have you read Tiedge's poem, "The Struggle of the Greeks with Barbarism?" I should never have thought him capable of producing such a work; faulty as the verses are, considered merely as poetry. The conception is terribly beautiful. But I cannot understand how it is that the excitement should not be much greater and more universal in Germany. One sickens at the specious show of feeling, and the faint-hearted apathy of men whom you must allow to pass for well-meaning persons. The personal feeling of our King is very evident and very honourable to him.

CCCXLI.

BONN, 16*th July*, 1826.

. . . . This time fifteen years I made a pause in the composition of my History—during our journey to Holstein. That was indeed, dear Dora, as you call it, the blossoming time of my life. And yet, if it were not winter around me, there were still within me a time of bloom, if not of spring or summer. I do not feel at all old yet in mind; my life is prolonged by love and happiness, and puts forth fresh shoots. My knowledge has increased greatly in variety and extent since that time; but I should never have undertaken the work, had I then had the accumulation of materials which it now costs me weary labour to organise.

I cannot say that I could ever repent my resolution to take up our abode here, since I have once for all given up a more agreeable and attractive life; which I confess I must not allow myself to look back upon, else my heart swells and my eyes moisten. And yet, it may be best so, for in this degenerate state of politics, my position there would have become very difficult. Ten years hence, I may very likely be able to make another journey across the Alps. My spirits rise at this castle in the air, and Marcus is delighted. We had a visit yesterday from Wilhelm Voss, whom I had not seen since 1811, and like much better now, than in his youthful days, one-and-twenty years ago, when he was a Bonapartist at the time of our disaster at Ulm. He had with him the proof sheets of the second part of the "Anti-symbolik," containing an extremely pleasing autobiography of his father's youth—the first fifteen years of his life,—but also a fuller recapitulation of the quarrel with Heyne than has ever yet appeared; unspeakably painful. I had intended to write a very short essay indicating what Voss had been to the nation and to literature, and to append to it a few apologetic pages, on the origin of the ill-feeling in this affair; which now I cannot do.

The sisters Jacobi were here a month with their nephew, the president. They had with them the correspondence of

Goethe with their brother, which is a great curiosity. These letters show Goethe in an unexpectedly favourable light; they exhibit a large heart, and strong deep emotions. Jacobi's letters are constrained, artificial, and laboured; it gives me pain to say this. In the first period of their acquaintance, before Goethe goes to Weimar, he notices this on one occasion; he wishes for his friend a growth in love, and thereby in simplicity and productive power.

How sad it is, on the contrary, to see the idolatry which Goethe suffers to be paid to him now, about which, you too have probably seen the elegantly-printed book!

The sisters Jacobi bear a grudge against Goethe; more especially, as it appears, on account of the "Goldsmith of Ephesus," the conclusion of which, it must be granted, is unintelligible, but certainly not intended as they take it; and on account of his description of his stay at Pempelfort,* in 1792.

You think that universal sympathy must overpower the governments? Alas! you do not understand the matter, and do not know the extent of our political paralysis. In England there has not been the remotest expression of feeling as in France; the proclamation which prevented the departure of the ship lying ready equipped, caused the destruction of Missolonghi, and it has not been censured in any opposition paper. Hence I blame that nation beyond all others. Unhappily the feeling among us in Germany is very superficial; and we must be more ashamed of the levity which has allowed us so soon to forget the dreadful end of Missolonghi, than rejoiced at the liberality previously shown. . . . .

CCCXLII.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, *6th August*, 1826.

Our governments must give us credit for a high opinion of the importance of our thoughts and words, my old friend, when they set a price upon our letters, exceeding

* Jacobi's residence.

that of many small books. I am anything but parsimonious, but I should write four or five times as many letters, if it were not for the high postage, which makes a single letter cost as much as four printed sheets, on the composition and revision of which you have exerted every power of your mind. However, it is not merely, or chiefly, the opportunity of sending you a few lines,—lines, for the time of long, though rare, letters, has vanished years ago,—but an ardent desire to say a word of affection to you on your journey. May it be blessed to you! I trust it will, for I have myself found health in Italy, which I had thought denied to me for ever. God grant that you may find it so likewise! So you are taking the same route which I did just ten years ago. You will know how to enjoy its pleasures, which I foolishly threw away like a froward child. It is easier for you also; for what did I hope for then? How much was there to which I was obliged to resign myself! You can overlook what is foolish and what is bad; as I should now overlook it myself. Go with your heart and all your senses open to the earthly paradise, to Naples above all, and shut your eyes to everything of which you have a presentiment that it would irritate you. . . . .

Where shall I send you the new edition of my first volume? the revision of which is nearly completed, but the printing advances slowly. I wish you may read it when perfectly at leisure, and that it may satisfy you. It is immensely enhanced in value; much of the new part is, I think, well written; much has been sacrificed, even where I have not been able to replace what has been omitted with anything equally good; some portions which my friends will miss; but nothing is left which I could not have written in its present form with full conviction. What has become of that time, fifteen years ago, when my daring creations filled me with happiness and delighted you? I do not feel old yet; I feel much clearer in my mind, and much richer in knowledge, but not, as then, fruitful in combinations and inventions. I long to have finished the revision, that I may proceed to the third volume. It is wearisome to write what

you know already, and have brought into a clear point of view. From my childhood, among the divine attributes, that of preserving has always seemed to me extremely *ennuyant;* as an employment almost beneath an angel, and hence we cannot wonder that affairs do not proceed particularly well.

I am acting as if a leave-taking were before me, when we jest because our heart is heavy. My heart is very heavy, my old friend! and yet I hope your journey will do you good. A passionate longing to be across the Alps again, still seizes upon me when the birds take their flight thither; and how much more when it is a friend! Why did you not come when I was there? Why have I not been permitted to be your guide there? I press you to my heart, and give you my blessing. My wife sends her love.

Give my greetings to the statue of Marcus Aurelius, and the lions under the Capitol, and my old Teatro di Marcello, and the Gulf of Naples, and—everything.

Yet again, God bless your journey to you.

Your old NIEBUHR.

CCCXLIII.

TO PERTHÈS.

BONN, 29*th January*, 1827.

. . . . You say, dear Perthès, that you stand towards the Catholics as east to north. You are quite right in so standing. But that is towards the Catholics as they were in the wholesome period of their depression, when the question was one of difference of opinion, and nothing further. But now all the old evils have awakened to full activity; all the priestcraft, all, even the most gigantic plans for conquest and subjugation; and there is no doubt, that they are secretly aiming at and working towards a religious war, and all that tends to bring it on. Therefore, my dear friend, we must now be much on our guard, and look closely to it that we do not serve as tools to these people; I thank God that he has removed Stolberg in time, for he would not have been a match for their artifices. Whoever lives in a

Catholic part of Germany, must remark that, with few exceptions, the scholars, the citizens, &c., are what they are among ourselves, but that a curse of stupidity, of vulgarity, or both, seems to rest upon the clergy, and that the proselytizers, and warriors of the holy militia, are true children of the devil.

CCCXLIV.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *4th March*, 1827.

. . . . I have received a friendly letter from old Stein, in which he only contends that I was wrong in assuming that the oligarchy are secretly preparing to assert boundless pretensions: on this point he allows himself to be imposed upon. From our King I have received a letter of thanks which will serve me as a shield, if the oligarchy should raise an outcry.

Several persons in Paris have sent me friendly salutations, and invitations to go there. I think of doing so in about two years, and still hope to make fresh discoveries of importance in the Library. . . . .

CCCXLV.

BONN, *26th April*, 1827.

Your affectionate letter arrived here, dear Dora, during my absence. The machine had nearly come to a stand-still, and I felt the necessity of shaking it so strongly, that I no longer delayed availing myself of the facilities afforded by the diligences on these excellent roads, but set off last Tuesday week to Coblentz and Treves, and reached home again last Sunday. The direction of my journey was chosen, in fact, in order to induce Brandis to accompany me; he needed motion and change still more than myself, and Treves was the first place he could decide upon going to. The old Roman city with its ruins, and the relics of antiquity discovered there, had long attracted me; but I had not liked to go there without Gretchen and the children. I

do not repent of having made this excursion; the physical object seems fully attained; I feel once more bright and active. I had got so absorbed in intricate inquiries, connected with my work, that I could not drive them out of my thoughts for a moment, and yet was unable to take a comprehensive view of them.

The road from Bonn to Coblentz, which I have now travelled many times, is so beautiful, that one can never tire of it, and can delight in it even when the vegetation is still very backward, as it was when I left home; from Coblentz to Treves, the road crosses the hills which connect the Eifel with the Hündsrück ranges, a tiresome road through a bleak and barren district, where even the woods are still without leaves. The situation of Treves itself is strikingly beautiful; the ruins are very extensive, and highly interesting to the antiquary, as they afford an illustration of the great difference that prevailed between the style of architecture in Rome and the provinces at the same period. There, as in nearly all parts of our Rhenish provinces, the prosperity is cheering; handsome new houses are springing up in the city, and roads are repairing which have been forsaken ever since the seventeenth century, and were only to be traced by the garden walls. On the other bank of the river, cottage after cottage is built on the rock against the face of the magnificent hill; so rich is the country becoming through the increased consumption of its wines, which were formerly little esteemed, and now find a sale in all districts of the kingdom. The inhabitants are a lively and very friendly race. I have made myself quite popular in this country; I find myself received everywhere with the greatest kindness. One of our fellow-travellers in the diligence would not resign the office of my *cicerone* (he was a citizen) though some intelligent tutors at the Gymnasium were waiting to act as my guides. On our journey home, an inhabitant of Treves said, "It was a blessing for Catholic Germany to have a Protestant government, so that the priests could not go on as they were doing in France."

On my return, I set about a long-delayed work, the

thorough arrangement of my papers, collecting and putting together those belonging to the various epochs of my life, which were still for the most part in confusion, separating those written at Berlin, at Rome, and since we have been here. It awakened many and very sad emotions. I had shrunk from these feelings, and therefore postponed the work; now it is over. Notwithstanding the age which I have reached, I have won the power of looking forward, and feel still youthful in that respect. When I think of what I have lost irrevocably, it makes my heart beat, and brings the tears into my eyes; I repress them. The great work of my life, so far as it has advanced, inspires me with courage and firmness. I know that my life has not been spent in vain, that I can do more now than before my journey to Italy. I think seriously of visiting Italy again, when Marcus has reached his twentieth year, and can delight myself in the idea like a child.

A letter came from Goethe during my absence; an article that he has written for the next number of "Kunst und Alterthum," with a little accompanying note, in which he calls it the *passionate* expression of his emotions in reading my book, which he imparts to the author, because "such a work may have the happiest effects in kindling and confirming our faith in truth and simplicity." Such words are worth much to me, and to you also, dear Dora. . . . .

[The following is the article referred to by Niebuhr.]

NIEBUHR'S ROMAN HISTORY.

It may appear presumptuous if I venture to state, that I have read this important work through, from beginning to end, in a few days, evenings, and nights, and have a second time derived the greatest advantage from it. But this assertion of mine will be explained, and receive some credit, when I say, at the same time, that I had already devoted the greatest attention to the first edition, and had sought to

make myself master of the facts, no less than of the method of the work.

When we witness the want of true criticism in so many departments of learning, even in this enlightened century, we are rejoiced to have placed before our eyes a model which makes us comprehend what criticism really is. And if the orator must aver with threefold emphasis, that the beginning, middle, and end of his art, is to give a false colour to all things, in this work, on the contrary, we perceive that the living, active love of truth has guided the writer through the labyrinth. He does not, properly speaking, proceed on his own former assertions; he rather turns the same criticism against himself which he had formerly employed against ancient authors, and thus wins a double triumph for truth. For this is her glorious nature, that wherever she may appear, she opens our eyes and heart, and gives us courage to look round in the same manner on the fields in which we ourselves have to work, and to draw in the reviving breath of renewed faith.

I honestly confess that many details may have escaped me in my hasty perusal, but I foresee that the high import of the whole will ever unfold itself before me with deeper significance.

Meanwhile, I have drawn from its perusal refreshment and encouragement. On the one hand, I can once more take genuine delight in every honest endeavour, and, on the other, while I do not exactly suffer myself to be irritated by the reigning errors and misapprehensions in science, particularly the logical development of false premises, and the distortion of truth by covert fallacies, yet I can make war with a certain indignation on every species of obscurantism, which unhappily changes its mask with the peculiar characteristic of each individual, and diligently conceals with its manifold veils the pure ray of delight, and the fertility of truth, even from healthy eyes.

The above has been lying since the 8th of February among many other unfinished papers; no use could be

made of it, for it does not, properly speaking, say anything about the book which called forth this burst of feeling; it only expresses with passionate force the condition of my heart and mind at that moment. Yet I now resolve, as I am about to send a little gift on my own part to the esteemed author of that work, to communicate to him a copy of it, in confidence, for it may be of consequence to him to see what effect his peculiar labours have on the general mind; the noblest effect, that while they impart knowledge, they also kindle and confirm our faith in truth and simplicity.

WEIMAR, *4th April*, 1827.

This sheet was meant to accompany the last number of Kunst und Alterthum, but as the completion of that number has been delayed, it shall serve as its forerunner, and recommend me to your continued kind remembrance. With faithful sympathy,

GOETHE.

WEIMAR, *15th April*, 1827.

CCCXLVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, *29th April*, 1827.

. . . . . Instead of myself you shall at all events have my work. . . . . Now that so long a time has elapsed since the book saw the light, I cannot write about it with the same warmth as on its first appearance; the charm of novelty goes far even with what proceeds from our own hand, and we grow indifferent to the children of our mind, however dear to us, when we have emancipated them, and dismissed them from the parental home. Let it, therefore, speak for itself; you will come forward to meet it with kindness. A more affectionate reception my writings on Roman history cannot find in my own family than from you; there is only one thing which I fear with you, that your affection may cause you to regret that the imperfect work, which will be dearer to you from its origin in, and

connection with, that period in the life of both of us to which no other can ever approach, has been destroyed to make way for a more perfect production. It is possible that your tenderness for the work, which took its rise under the animating influence of your friendship, and the instruction I derived from your conversation, when my indolence and want of literary skill would have for ever prevented my acquiring it from books, may have made you too indulgent to its defects, and given you a distaste to what announces itself as an improvement. I know this sort of affection which loves its object just as much in its relations and bearings as in itself; which deems the indistinct aspirations of youth towards something higher than we can perhaps ever attain, dearer than the proportion which a riper age maintains between its powers and its aims: the new St. Paul's may be much more beautiful, and yet I may look upon the old structure with regret in spite of all its faults. I trust, however, you will believe that I could not help forming a different judgment, and not suffer regret to mingle with the conviction which you have doubtless formed, that the contents of the book have gained immensely in value; that its principles are now immoveably fixed for all ages. I do not hesitate to say, that the discovery of no ancient historian could have taught the world so much as my work; and that all that may hereafter come to light from ancient and uncorrupted sources, will only tend to confirm or develope the principles I have advanced. This is the case with Dion Cassius, of whom I have discovered that he has copied the earlier history directly from Fabius. How happy it would make me for you to read my book on the ruins of Rome, if your health and spirits allow you to do so.

The revision of this volume has occupied me unremittingly for more than a year, nearly all of which I have passed in better spirits than I could ever have believed would fall to my lot, since my youth was over, and that, even in times of intense happiness, was not strictly speaking cheerful. And as my wife enjoyed very tolerable health during the last summer and the beginning of the winter, we have passed a

very happy period, something like that which I enjoyed in 1810 and 1811. . . . . .

You will have heard of the edition of the Byzantine historians, which I am superintending. It is a great delight to me to be able thus to infuse some life into our literary doings; to give employment to young philologists; to give extension, activity, and perfection to typography; to contribute my mite to the increase of general prosperity. . . .

When shall we meet again, my dear, dear friend? I supplicate Heaven that you may be as completely regenerated after a year's sojourn in Italy, as I was; meanwhile, when you return to this side of the Alps, you must spare yourself, and allow yourself recreation. To spare yourself, it will be necessary for you to take long holidays; and you will best find recreation with the friend who is the nearest to you in all higher points of view, as you are to him. So, in 1828, you must spend more than a few passing days with us.

I conjure you, as I have done for years, to tear yourself from all disturbing and irritating circumstances. I could fain entreat you to remove to our university, but in that case tell me beforehand, that I may purchase houses, since the price of students' apartments would certainly rise 30 per cent. Or cast away all the burdens of official obligation, and settle among us, and deliver public lectures as I do, and then we shall both forget that we have grown older since 1810. If my wife were here, she would unite her entreaties to mine, as well as her greetings to you and yours. I embrace you with tenderness, my beloved friend. God grant that you may soon recover completely, and that we may meet again.

Your old NIEBUHR.

CCCXLVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

1*st July* 1827.

In the second volume, the first half has been revised, and the period up to the decemviral legislation is entirely new. I have no lack of materials; indeed it is one of my finest achievements, that from the notices relating to these forty years, I have brought out a history worthy of full reliance, although it deviates essentially from the statements of our historians. But I have now quite lost the state of feeling in which I wrote the first volume; the collectedness and quiet in which you can take a vivid survey of the result of your meditations, and adapt your mode of representation to it. May it return! I have often lost and recovered this power; but at my age it will not do for me to be too long without it. I have lost too this summer that feeling of happiness and contentment, which gave me last year such a thorough enjoyment of life, as I had never hoped to regain. There are several external circumstances to trouble me. In the first place Gretchen's health. . . . .

A very intelligent Englishman, who visited me a few weeks ago, looked forward to a very gloomy future for his country. There is a fearful and ever-widening gulf between the wealthy and the indigent classes; they are two hostile nations; poor Ireland is indeed a nation by herself, and her sufferings such as perhaps never can be remedied.

There is certainly great prosperity here, and were the government what it ought to be, our State would be rich in blessings. Wherever you look, you see increasing comfort, and active enterprise crowned with success. The advantages of belonging to a great State are innumerable; what a contrast to our condition is presented by the misery in Nassau, Darmstadt, Rhenish Bavaria! The people see clearly, and they say it too in the district of Mayence, that in small States representative forms have no effect but to increase expense. In those parts the people actually refuse to elect members.

One book containing much nonsense, but many correct statements of fact, is Sidon's Letters on North America. If there are any, who have not yet forgotten the childish hopes, which some years ago provoked many even to insolence towards the more experienced, let them read in this book, from the pen of a man who fancies himself describing an enviable condition of society, the barbarism prevailing in the United States. It also presents a vivid picture of the Germans in North America.

Have you the new edition of Goethe? The Helena will leave a painful impression on your mind as on mine. How could Goethe hatch such a thing? But among the smaller poems, which have never appeared before, to my knowledge, there are some very charming verses; there are also some songs written in his golden youth, and printed now for the first time, or revived after having long slumbered in oblivion, for instance, the Wanderer's Storm Song. . . . .

CCCXLVIII.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, 14*th September*, 1827.

. . . . During this interval, in which I have been incapable of nobler tasks, I have occupied myself with superintending a new edition of the Byzantine authors. Nothing can seem a madder enterprise than to announce the undertaking of a new edition of this library of writings, when I am midway in the execution of the Roman History, the business of my life; but here too fortune has waited upon valour. Volunteers are coming forward on every side, to range themselves under my banner and take the parts that I shall assign to them. The greatest readiness is evinced to aid me with communications; and in particular from Holland and France I have received presents of transcripts, &c., which are sent to me with expressions of cordiality that I am not ashamed to call touching. I have myself corrected the text of Agathias; several are undertaking to revise authors; transcripts of *inedita*, collations, come to me from

all quarters: *fervet opus;* the activity is splendid. It has hitherto occasioned me an enormous amount of work by bringing me into correspondence with men in all parts of the world. The most difficult part by far, nay, all the difficulties, except a few of little importance, are overcome, and I am now once more devoted to my History. Is it not a great thing that a publisher and a philologist should be able to accomplish, in six years from hence at furthest, a work that was but partially carried out in sixty years, under the auspices and with the munificent aid of Louis XIV.? But as to the practicability of the scheme, thereby hangs a tale which is not altogether a subject of satisfaction. You must know, there is now springing up in Germany a class who buy great books without intending to read them. For a long time, we were too honest to do this; and hence, after the devil, in God's service, had put an end to the convents, which formerly used to buy ponderous works, and lay them on their shelves, to lead a useless existence like those monks themselves—works of this magnitude could not be disposed of. At present, new books, which are only bought by readers, meet with ill success, except *Scottiana* and *Claureniana.* Collections, on the contrary, are sure of purchasers. The *petite maitresse* buys the complete works of Van der Velde, &c., the rich man, my Byzantine Historians, &c.

The Museum has been parted in two; Brandis and I have kept the philological part alone. If you have anything to communicate, send it to us, even if it should belong to the province of jurisprudence. Between us it is almost ludicrous to mention the fee, two Friedrich d'ors.

Your old NIEBUHR.

CCCXLIX.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *4th November*, 1827.

Since I last wrote to you, dear Dora, some time has passed like the summer, in a whirl of bustle through the visits of travellers; it seems to have come to an end now, at least, for the present. . . . .

I beg you will let me know of all the passages which you and Twesten have marked as wanting in clearness of conception or style; it will be a real service. On one account I am sorry that the new edition is appearing so early; the English translation will be injured by it. I have received nine proof sheets of this; and it is more successful than I could ever have ventured to hope for. It is all that I could wish: the apprehension and the reproduction of my meaning are alike vivid: nothing has been sacrificed to the language and national taste; every shade of the German thought has been preserved, without violating the English language. The outward dress is very handsome; this is an honour accorded to the work by the University of Cambridge. I am assured on all sides that it will be well received; not a few copies of the German edition have been sold in England, and the work has also made some political sensation. . . . .

CCCL.

BONN, *2nd December*, 1827.

I must see how I get through the winter. The printing of the new edition of the first part is proceeding rapidly: the emendations affect no main points, although they are not unimportant; still they involve labour and meditation; and correcting the press takes up a good deal of time. I have, besides, to correct the press for the edition of Agathias which I have prepared myself. It is my intention to have the printing of the second volume finished before setting out on our journey, but I am sorry to say, I have not

yet advanced far enough with the manuscript to feel sure that I shall be able to accomplish this. Unfortunately, the period up to the Decemvirate was the most difficult portion of the whole work, and I had not thought this out beforehand in my own head as I had the fundamental institutions of the State. I have at last made it perfectly clear to myself, but the style is still languid and dry. This list, however, by no means includes all the tasks to the execution of which I am either pledged, or challenged in such a way that I cannot decline them; not to speak of the lectures, which seldom require more than a preliminary meditation, and arrangement of my topics. I long for the holidays of next summer, which, however, I shall not be able to spend quite in idleness. I promised Bekker to revise Polybius with him, sooner or later. Now I cannot put this off any longer with propriety, since the Excerpts from the Vatican have appeared, and so I mean to devote to it my solitude at the Baths of Nenndorf, and a few hours in Holstein. Next winter I hope to proceed with fresh vigour to the revision of the third volume, and afterwards to the continuation.

Heaven grant that I may make at least some considerable advance towards the later periods, even if I do not reach the goal I have fixed for myself, before all youthful fire is quite extinguished in me, and the tranquillity is broken, in which we can now work! The completion of the work is scarcely to be expected, though from the fourth volume onwards, the labour will be incomparably less; for but little research is required after that period, and I am so familiar with the events, that, except a very few corrections from memory, I could relate them as if I had been an eye-witness. So that in this part of my work, the main thing will be, to secure a bright mood for the sake of the style.

It is very improbable that the repose which we have now enjoyed in these western countries for the last twelve years will be long preserved to us. It is evident that a breach has been made in the wall of the edifice; how long its fall will be delayed depends upon accident. Who dare wish that

this or that event should happen? We have all, of course, rejoiced over the battle of Navarino; you in Holstein, as well as we in Bonn; but it is the joy of revenge, for it has not alleviated past calamities. The opportunity of rescuing what was still left in the Morea has been lost, partly owing to Pharisaic scrupulosity, partly owing to Canning's delays on the score of the treaty. To us, who are in her neighbourhood, France is even more interesting than to those at a distance. If the liberals had conquered in the elections, the choice would have lain between a violent counter-revolution, or a liberal ministry. I believe that the court could have carried the former through. But such a victory would have been a very bad thing for Catholic districts like ours, where the clergy, encouraged by irrational partisans, are continually advancing in their pretensions. On the other hand, a liberal administration would have still worse consequences for us; the journals were already talking about the "disgraceful limitation of France by boundaries which were not her natural ones." They all secretly cherish the idea of breaking out, and extending their sway to the Rhine; and on this point, aristocrats and liberals would unite willingly in the end. Bunsen has arrived in Berlin, and writes that he shall begin his journey back to Rome by way of Bonn, about the middle of this month. Savigny's letters are very gloomy; he is still suffering as much as ever. From another quarter I hear that his approbation of the Roman History is undiminished.

The course of lectures that I am delivering this winter can attract none but lovers of knowledge—or those who wish to be such. It is on Ancient Geography and Ethnography. Still, above eighty have inscribed their names, and I should think there are as many present.

CCCLI.

BONN, *30th December*, 1827.

Gretchen's severe illness has brought great commotion and affliction into the whole household. . . . .

The unintelligible sentence that I sent you a short time

since about politics in France, means this: if the liberals carry the day, the French will forthwith overstep their frontiers; and further, every coalition which may overthrow the ministry, without adopting an entirely different political system, will also take this course, in order to appease the nation for leaving other things on their present footing. But if the priestly party get the upper hand uncontrolled, which would be quite the most probable result of Villèle's fall, the prevalent spirit will be that of the League,—that which heralded in the Thirty Years' War, a spirit which is now cherished and promoted by many Catholics.

The irrational precipitation of the French priests may, perhaps, spoil their game; it has already alienated from them the higher ranks, who were long favourable to their cause; the middle classes are almost entirely against them; in many provinces a great portion of the common people also: but in others, indeed in many, they completely sway the multitude. For this very reason, many of the nobility regard them as democratic, in fact, jacobinical; and not unjustly.

It is the most senseless proceeding in the world, to aim at Villèle's overthrow, since the King, if he changes the ministry, will throw himself quite into the hands of the priests. Some individuals among the liberals perceive this, as did one who was here a few months ago; but in general the French party men are incurably irrational.

Farewell, dearest Dora. Gretchen and the children send their love to you.

CCCLII.

BONN, 14*th March*, 1828.

. . . . . I do not know what to think of the East. Nothing hardly can be saved, and they will fight among themselves for the possession of the soil. Woe to those who did nothing in 1821! I abhor those who defend and justify the Turks, and yet I tremble at the consequences of the war. There are periods in which something much better than happiness and security of life is attainable, but I fear that

is not the case in our present age. England's rapidly accelerating decline is a very remarkable and mournful phenomenon; it is a mortal sickness for which there is no remedy. I liken the English of the present day to the Romans of the third century after Christ. The course of things in France is quite contrary to my expectations. It is possible that the Left may create disturbances again, if the new elections render them independent of that fraction of the Right led by Agier; but it is also possible that new parties may be formed, as was the case in England under the house of Hanover, which may really keep themselves within constitutional limits. If so, France will become conscious of her power, and woe then to poor, divided, decaying Germany!

Portalis appeared to be a respectable man at Rome; but I should never have expected to see him a Minister of State. However, I sent him my sincere congratulations a short time ago; and a few days after, expressed to some other good friends of mine, my regret at his retirement from office.

I have bought lately, at auctions, the original edition of Woldemar (1779), and the Kunstgarten;* it is very interesting to compare both with the later editions. Roth has added an extraordinarily beautiful passage as an appendix to the latest edition of the works, on the fruitlessness of the efforts of good men, where the evil principle has the upper hand. Further, it is very remarkable to see how Jacobi shared the optimist hopes so general in 1779; and to notice when he renounced them subsequently, the turn which he gave to what he had said on the subject.

CCCLIII.

BONN, *20th April*, 1828.

I form no conjectures as to what may happen,—do not know whether the peace of Germany is immediately threatened or not: no one writes to me about such things, and I generally banish them almost wholly from my mind. But sooner or

* Another novel by Jacobi.

later, a war is impending over us in Germany as surely as over other countries;—a war in which one cannot heartily espouse either side for the sake of an idea, but only so far as it affects our own weal and woe,—a war whose issue must be in every way most lamentable. The cause of the unhappy Greeks, and the paradise which might have been redeemed from barbarism, is no longer in reality the question, since we have allowed them to be almost exterminated; and new conquests for Russia are a mournful business! Woe to those who did not perceive seven years ago, and did not choose to perceive, that they ought to take advantage of the Emperor Alexander's yielding temper, to found a new Christian empire in the East, without extending neighbouring powers; who did not see that such a State would be a much stronger bulwark against Russia than these miserable Turks! As regards Prussia, there is no fear that we shall incur the shame of drawing our sword for the Turks.

I should have many good hopes for France, if the election had not called such utterly irrational and extreme liberals into the position of leaders, that it must come to bending or breaking between the throne and the Chambers. It is sad that people always insist on extreme men, while by far the greater number of those who exercise a vote would gain their real objects much better, by means of sensible people. Very few now seriously wish for anything essentially bad or dangerous—the case was quite different even so late as five or seven years ago,—but it is very easy to impel the majority of the assembly to extremely senseless and alarming steps, and this may provoke the court to a *coup-d'état*. If they had suspended the constitution a year ago, they would have been playing a hazardous game, but it might have succeeded, had they acted consistently,—for instance, decidedly abolished the freedom of the press. There would have been no danger unless a regiment rebelled, and that was highly improbable. Now, the experiment would be incomparably more hazardous, and yet the extravagancies of the liberals may cause it to be tried, though very few of them desire a revolution.

Have I then really forgotten to tell you that I agreed with one of the booksellers here, a year ago, to collect my smaller writings? I am glad that you approve of it. The political ones will be excluded; they may be revived again after my death: also the polemical ones, which need not be preserved at all. One must be able to contend upon occasion, but controversy should evaporate like a spoken word. It is thus with the orators in free states, it should be thus in the republic of letters. Neither shall the review of Heeren be reprinted. Have I told you then, that I have received copies of the English translation of the History? It is not absolutely free from faults; with respect to which, it is singular that they do not occur in really difficult passages, but in perfectly clear ones, so that they can only have arisen from inattention: but these are trifles; on the whole the work is masterly, and a perfectly genuine representation of the original. Then too it has such a beautiful exterior. The language is changing; many expressions in this translation, and in other examples of the higher literature, are quite new and unprecedented.

The English pay so much attention now to the literature of the Continent, that two rival Foreign Reviews appear at once, and compete with each other. In one of them there is a review of my History, as friendly, but not as discerning as I could wish. Were my old affection for England unchanged, it would give me intense pleasure to stand in such high estimation there. My principles, which I announce with the most absolute conviction of their truth, are adopted there without reservation, and will take root too firmly to be extirpated. But my heart has become estranged from England; the period of her glory has passed away; and the shamelessness with which not alone the ministry, but the nation side with the Turks, the unscrupulous practice of usury, and the exclusive idolatry of gain, disgust me; and the whole moral condition of the nation is degenerating, though to a great extent, this is as much its misfortune as its fault. I could fain be younger that I might witness the issue of many things: for instance, with regard to England, whither it will lead, that year by year so many thousands of

starving Irish come over, and augment the number of paupers, and that the middle class, between wealth and abject poverty, is becoming quite extinct.

Yesterday I finished the correction of the third edition. It has received an extension of forty pages, through the addition of a number of results and corroborative facts scattered over the whole: I have taken pains also to remove whatever instances I found of obscurity or ambiguity. As this is now certainly the last revision to which reference can be made in the second volume, and as 1000 copies have again been printed, I am certain of five years' rest from it. There is to be a larger impression of the second volume, the editing of which will occupy me during the winter. God grant that I may be able to work at it with a cheerful mind! With the Byzantines I shall really have no more trouble by that time: I am upon the point of finishing the last piece of work connected with them that falls to my share,—it is, I think, a successful attempt. Henceforward, I shall merely have to distribute the parts: I reckon much on Marcus's tutor Classen, who is daily becoming more attached to us, and is a genuine disciple after my own heart.

CCCLIV.

TO MADAME NIEBUHR.

NENNDORF, *6th June*, 1828.

You may be perfectly easy about me; the intolerable dulness of the existence here involves no dangers, though it really exceeds all conception. The background of my thoughts is the separation from you, and that is in itself enough to drive such a social being as myself to despair. I already know every path in the promenades and wood, and every road in the neighbourhood. I am incapable of reflection and study, and promise you not to attempt it. It is quite too great an exertion even to read Rehberg's writings, which mostly treat of speculative philosophy. It has come to this with me, that I have sent for a novel by Cooper, the American Walter Scott—(N.B.—Translated!)

—from the circulating library, in the so-called bookseller's shop here.

Rehberg's collected writings incontestably belong to the most important works in our language. The composition of this volume,—the weaving of minor essays and papers of a philosophical description, in the narrow and wider sense of the word, into an account of his views and external relations, during the period in Germany up to 1804 (the period of his youth), is a most original and happy idea, and it is executed in a masterly style. The perspicuity and accuracy with which he describes the connecting and mediating parties is particularly admirable. This will form an introduction to many portions that will find their place in the succeeding volumes. Our respective paths are quite divergent; he is as essentially speculative, as I am contemplative and individualising; over many speculations of most brilliant acuteness, I can only smile as the most unimportant things in the world; still, thank God, I can admire what it is not permitted me to do. His historical surveys do not correspond to the truth, and contain as many errors as principles. Our judgment of Diderot is equally dissimilar; the strictly poetical element is also, I fancy, a foreign region to him. I should care almost more to know him personally and discuss matters with him, than to know Goethe. . . . .

CCCLV.

NENNDORF, *Monday, 16th June*, 1828.

Since Friday the weather has changed. Pertz and Hartman came to call on me; and after they had continued their journey at six o'clock in the evening, I could not make up my mind to come in from the open air, it was so heavenly. Not a breath was stirring, and there was not a trace of clouds in the whole expanse of sky; but the air was laden with the aromatic perfume of the white acacia and wild jessamine. The honeysuckle is out of bloom. It was the first gala Sunday, the first day on which there was dancing. I wandered about in the avenues, turned into the ball-room

from time to time, and then took more distant field-paths; I could not resolve to go in till the sun had set for the third time in a purple glow. Then I wanted to begin a letter to you, my beloved Gretchen; but I was too weary, and soon comforted myself with the reflection that to-day, before post-time, I should have taken thirteen of my baths!

I can give you a very good account of myself. Pertz found me yesterday much altered for the better during the week that has elapsed. The day before yesterday, I found and plucked the first beautiful forget-me-nots; I wanted to send them you to-day, but they are not dry enough yet. . . .

CCCLVI.

COPENHAGEN, 19*th July*, 1828.

We arrived here yesterday after as good a passage as possible, my dear wife. Forchhammer and Michelsen were at the landing-place, and helped in the difficulties of disembarkation, getting on shore, &c. . . .

The empty harbour, the deserted Holm, made a painful impression on me; Marcus compared the eagerness of the porters who seized upon the luggage, with Naples, and certainly, the urgency of the beggars reminds you of the worst scenes of the kind in Italy. On the other hand, the cutting wind here makes you feel that you are in an Arctic climate; one perceives a great difference even in comparing it with Kiel; you would fancy Copenhagen as much north of Kiel, as Kiel is in fact and sensibly, north of Bonn. The eastern part of the city is so still, that it reminds me of the fairy tale where the people are all spell-bound to one point for ages. From the Zollbude to the Neumarkt, everything looks exactly as if I had only left it yesterday, only gone to decay a little here and there. Christiansburg, on the contrary, far exceeds my expectation. The Frauen-Kirche, too, which has been restored, looks better than I had supposed it would. The parts left uninjured in the northern and western parts of the city, have, I think improved in appearance.

Schimmelman is at Seelust, and they say at his house, that he will be sure to be found there to-morrow, so I shall go there if I receive no express message to the contrary. . . . .

Later. I went to Seelust on Sunday. Schimmelman is quite infirm with age,* and the warmth of his heart seems to be extinguished as well as the light of his intellect. He seems too, only to retain old circumstances in his memory, and although he knows the positions which I have occupied, to look upon me still as his old dependant. He knew nothing of my Roman History, though I had sent him a copy of my first edition, which proves how much his memory has suffered.

Most of those whom I meet here, are very cordial and kind. I think I never spoke Danish so well, and I am still received as a fellow-countryman everywhere.

CCCLVII.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, 28*th November*, 1828.

With this, you will receive your copy of my Smaller Writings, dear Savigny!

I hear on all sides the most cheering accounts of your health. Thank God! I am not one to doubt what I earnestly wish for, because I am absolutely unable to conceive the possibility of homœopathy. If I were told you had been cured by an amulet, I should not fret myself about the danger of superstition, but thank God that you had recovered, by whatever means. Arndt will have told you about us. So far, my wife has been tolerably well; my complaint has returned, but is bearable. I sit at my writing, but it does not flow yet. Is my day gone by? or will my intellect brighten again? Our life gets more and more secluded and quiet, as the people come to see that I am really in earnest in retiring from the great world, and can no longer either

* He was at this time eighty-one years of age. He had moreover never quite forgiven Niebuhr for exchanging the Danish for the Prussian service.

help or injure them. I am, however, perfectly contented with the idea of living here, and I hope to remain faithful to the wisdom I have earned, and to take life easily. I hear to my great joy that you are doing so too, and are writing. The Leipsic catalogue confirms what I had already heard, that a new edition of your "Beruf,"* with additions, has appeared. What do you say to Rehberg's writings? Is not the framework which fastens the whole together, a masterpiece? I am lecturing on Roman History; this time, my lectures do not consist of analyses and researches, but results, and sound as if an ancient author had been discovered, whose writings yielded precisely all that I wanted to bring forward. I hope to bring the History quite to a conclusion. If I should ever see you, I hope to hear from you that you have received my new editions as favourably as the first bold attempt.

Farewell, my dearest friend, my wife and I send our hearty love to you and yours. Your NIEBUHR.

In England, the first edition of the translation, consisting of a thousand copies, is already out of print, and my translators are about to translate my third edition. In England, my results triumph without opposition.

CCCLVIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *January*, 1829.

. . . . In Holstein, too, I have often been vexed when whatever the government did was censured. The people have no filial piety and no fatherland. The true citizen loves his country so well, that he cannot revile, or scoff at those who are at the helm of affairs, even when they guide it unskilfully—so well that even if those with whom he is at enmity come into power, he is reconciled to them by the fact of their standing in so close a relation with the State which is sacred to him, and being in some measure identified with it.

I expect to conclude the revision of the second volume

* "Beruf unseres Zeitalters zur Gesetzgebung."

within the next few days; the printing will begin in about three weeks. This volume will be necessarily very dry; the third quite the opposite. I wonder if it will have a good sale. A very large number of works are stopped because they do not sell. Rehberg's publisher will not continue the printing of his works. I have been requested to write a review of them, but cannot do so without expressing my disapprobation of his rancorous speeches about Goethe; and also of his having thought it sufficient reparation to insert in his preface an apology for his former attacks upon Prussia, while he allows writings to be reprinted "containing what" he "would not write now." If he will consent to this, I shall joyfully recognise their many excellencies. But it is very lamentable that authors of whom we ought to be proud should be thus neglected.

In these last few days, I have been reminded very forcibly how much beautiful poetry came out thirty years ago or more, (particularly the poems of Voss and Stolberg,) of which we hear no more now,—which is, indeed, quite forgotten. . . . .

CCCLIX.

BONN, 12*th February*, 1829.

. . . . The passages in my History, referring to the Irish Catholics have made me to some extent a political authority in England, and I am quoted with favour or bitterness, but for the most part with favour. On this account I have been requested, by a member of parliament, to write my opinions on the subject. Formerly, I should have responded to the request with eagerness, but my old love for England is very much cooled. Personally, I have no reason to feel estranged from the nation; from none do I receive so many proofs of esteem,—sometimes of a very odd kind.

The contract for the purchase of the house was signed the day before yesterday. It is a great disadvantage for us that the severity of the winter will hinder its completion; still the main building will be quite habitable by the middle of May. . . . .

CCCLX.

BONN, *26th April*, 1829.

In the house which we are about to leave, I have spent more happy days than had been awarded to me for many years; just at present I feel rather depressed.* If I could make up my mind to leave Gretchen and the children for some months, and to spend so much money upon myself, a journey to London or Paris would afford me the refreshment I need. . . . .

[Our new house] is really such a pleasant and comfortable dwelling that it leaves nothing to wish for. . . . .

Under other circumstances I should set about the change in excellent spirits. I hope that it will deceive the Fate which seems to have decreed that I shall never live more than seven years in one place. I have often remembered with a heavy heart, that in August I shall have passed six years here already. A summons to Berlin has been long out of the question. . . . .

Read by all means Goethe's Correspondence with Schiller. In the third part, you will again find some of the most pleasing passages that have ever proceeded from Goethe's pen, and which show his personal character in as fair a light as one could wish. More of this hereafter. The contrast between him and Herder is very remarkable, as well as his indignation at the latter for never taking hearty pleasure in anything, but always trying to limit and modify his praises, that they might not be joyful. Nothing is easier than to do this, and to show that even the production in question is not faultless; he who rejoices in it knows this too; Goethe knew it too, where Herder's superciliousness stepped forth with such a wise air. But he also knew, that without the joyful satisfaction which lets well alone, we should have a miserable existence in this world. Such passages alone would make this letter a jewel to me.

* The first part of the letter gives an account of Madame Niebuhr's dangerous illness.

CCCLXI.

BONN, 14*th June*, 1829.

You have probably seen in the newspapers that my English translators have been defending me against an attack in the "Quarterly Review." I have received some copies of their article, and will send you one when I have an opportunity. A certain Dr. Granville had mentioned in his Travels to St. Petersburgh by way of Berlin, that I had remodelled my book into an entirely new work, adding, that a decisive influence on the rebellious disposition of the students was attributed to my earlier work. It is extremely likely that this was suggested to him by H. C. The "Quarterly Review" has taken this up, and accompanied it with a note, in which it pronounces it a crime, that clergymen of the Church of England should have translated a book containing the most disgusting scoffs at religion that have been written since Voltaire's time; they ought at least to have appended remarks in refutation. But, perhaps, they thought it unnecessary, because it must be allowed that my scoffs were "*as dull as pert.*" Upon this, they have been obliged to answer for themselves, since their prospects of patronage and promotion in the Church were endangered, as I foresaw would be the case; for it makes the Anglican hypocrites furious, that the historical character of the Jewish history should be contemplated in its true light. The defence is written in a most affectionate spirit as regards myself, and for the sake of this affection, you will pardon the prolixity which other readers will set down to my account, as well as to that of the English writers. Further, with many readers, their extreme veneration will inevitably produce a reaction.

I enjoy uninterrupted health, but am not in an energetic state of mind, and it is with great toil that I have dragged myself through the second volume so far that I can now see land, and look forward to the printing.

Let me recommend a book to you, dear Dora, if you have not yet read it, which I pronounce excellent; Ranke's History of the Servian Revolution. There is no other

historical work in our language, in which the materials obtained from oral accounts are so satisfactorily and luminously treated: the events take place—it is not the author who relates, and we give him our unconditional credence. Ranke has given himself such elaborate mental cultivation, that he is certain to remain an excellent writer. Count Platen's "Romantischer Œdipus," I should rank far below the "Verhängnissvolle Gabel," even if the passages, written in a spirit of animosity to Berlin, did not extend themselves to the whole of Prussia, and if they had been expiated by apology, as they have been with regard to Berlin itself. Still there are some clever things in it. If you happen to meet with Travels in the United States, by Duden (printed at Elberfeldt), do not forget to read it; it is the best and most instructive book of the kind. What he says of the Germans there, and of the evil consequences of their persisting in a barbarous separation from English culture, may remind you of what I have said, when I was with you, on this subject. I think you did not perceive that I was right, but were not angry with me for my opinion, as has often been the case in other instances.

You must read Bourrienne's Memoirs when you can get them. I look at things of this kind now more particularly on account of my lectures;* they excite undiminished interest, and my lecture-room is crowded to suffocation. I have dwelt long in exhibiting the development of the various events of the eighteenth century, and the condition of Europe before the Revolution. The first five lectures were attended by a French ecclesiastic, a tutor of the Duke of Bordeaux, who is perfectly acquainted with German, and to all appearance, is travelling as an emissary of the priestly party. There may be some more birds of this feather; but no one shall be able to lay anything to my charge, unless he puts forth downright lies and fabrications. The aspect of the political world is very threatening: the appearance of the Emperor at Berlin, reminds one alarmingly of 1805. Else on the whole, things look much better now in Germany.

* The lectures on the French Revolution.

than they did some years ago. An immense change has taken place in the feeling towards Prussia; not, indeed, in Hanover, but in the whole of Southern and Central Germany; in Saxony likewise, to an incredible extent. The Zollverein with Darmstadt has begun; the treaties with South Germany will complete it.

CCCLXII.

BONN, *20th June*, 1829.

Torrents of foreigners are pouring along our river-highway, but happily very few come near me; a reputation for inaccessibility protects me. Professor Wunder from Grimma has arrived to-day, and will spend the evening with us. We had lately an agreeable visitor in a certain Chevalier Andraym, Spanish Ambassador at Brussels, a frank and intelligent man, whose conversation afforded, what is to me about the greatest attraction with strangers, information about public events, bearing the unmistakeable stamp of accuracy. It had an extraordinary effect, to hear a Spaniard relating with indignation anecdotes of the bigotry in Brabant. With us, this spirit only displays itself in insignificant instances as yet, but it certainly ought to be watched. As we hear, it manifests itself in Saxony in a really insane manner. Many Saxons are almost in despair about it, and people who have been hitherto my bitter enemies, ever since the Congress of Vienna, are now rather disposed to obtrude their complaints upon me. It is very remarkable how the perception is spreading, that the small States are an evil now; great advantage might be taken of this to the promotion of the true welfare of Germany, but it will not be done. In these Rhenish provinces, the beneficial results which Darmstadt has experienced from its union with us has produced a crisis. Far as we are from perfection, our condition is in every respect undeniably superior to that of the neighbouring German countries; all classes are full of activity and enterprise, and both town and country are flourishing. Foreigners, who are best able to learn the real sentiments of the inhabitants, assure me, that

they now find in general great contentment even here, where formerly the feeling of estrangement towards the new rulers was so strong. One must not, indeed, look too far forward into the future, for there is reason to fear that the immense manufacturing population on the Lower Rhine will also experience their share of bad times, and when these have once come, no lasting remedy can be found.

. . . . I send you the "Vindication,"* dear Dora, and at last a copy of the "Kleine Schriften" also,† for yourself, as well as for Twesten and Dahlman. Have I told you that this collection is prohibited in Austria? On the other hand, I am assured that a larger number of copies have been ordered in France than of any learned German work before. However, a hostile review of my History has appeared there also. It will stand firmly enough nevertheless; but the way in which people make use of it in Germany to fabricate apparently original works, is almost ridiculous.

I should lead a very pleasant life, if my head were brighter, and Gretchen's state more encouraging.

CCCLXIII.

BONN, *6th September.*

. . . . I confidently hope that your apprehensions about your fate in Holstein are groundless. Hanover is a pledge that England will scarcely involve herself in a war,—and a war, however successful, could bring no positive gain to her, although the nation in its universal uneasiness desires it. This is the general opinion in all the great money markets, and my own, which keeps me easy. So I hope we may be able to hobble on for some time longer. England cannot wish to involve Prussia in a war with France, because an attempt on the part of the latter to press forward to the Rhine, would break up the Netherlands, whose existence is universally considered by the English indispensable to their interests. That the French, and *now*, more especially the so-called royalist party, harbour the idea of reconquering

* "Vindication of Niebuhr," by Hare and Thirlwall.
† His own "Minor Writings."

the Rhine frontier, is by no means doubtful to us *in these parts*, nor yet a secret. Even in this university, there are persons well known to be in communication with the priests in France, who are seeking to excite rebellion against the heretical government; attempts which would be simply laughable, if it were not for the unsatisfactory aspect of things in Belgium. It is not without an object that the Duke of Bordeaux is learning German. We have no reason to complain of the liberals; that is, of the native ones; and altogether I am without fear, as the people see more clearly every day that they are very well off under the German government, and contrast their prosperity and light burdens not only with the Netherlands, but also with France, where at present both agriculture and manufactures are in a very bad state as compared with ours.

In about a week, I shall make an excursion to Mayence, to visit an old friend, General Von Carlowitz. This change is really necessary for me, and while I should have been obliged to consent to the journey in order not to hurt an old friend, I take it for my own pleasure also, as well as from the feeling that I could not do without it; travelling always does me good. The world is going to sleep; not that there is any lack of exciting occurrences, but they leave men passive; the indifference and lethargy which have diffused themselves since I returned from Italy are shocking: I must make some effort not to be overcome by this universal somnolency. . . .

CCCLXIV.

BONN, *27th September*, 1829.

. . . . Besides my good old friend General Von Carlowitz, there is also in Mayence one of my hearers, who is very much attached to me, and is now staying there in the house of his parents. There is always a class among the students who cannot do too much for their tutors, and they reward one for one's pains. To the Rhinelanders and Catholics, what they hear from me is quite new; if they lay it to heart, one essential element of their real reunion with Germany, and recon-

ciliation to Protestantism will be gained. For every thing good must proceed from individuals in whom the right spirit has been awakened. The opposite party are working with might and main to widen the breach. The Catholic faction in France are just as much bent upon the conquest of Belgium and the Rhenish provinces, as the Imperial party. Towards the end of my lectures, induced by the complaints made by young Protestants of the attempts to stir up sedition among them, I publicly attacked this treasonable spirit, and pronounced a woe upon those who, instead of promoting the union of the German races, are actively endeavouring to make their differences a source of hatred and division; I have exclaimed to them, "Get thee behind me, Satan!" and thus put an end to hypocritical complaisance, and openly proclaimed hostilities; but it would have been cowardice to have avoided it. Fearlessness makes a very good impression on the higher class of minds among the young Catholics.

In spite of the miserable weather, there was never perhaps so much travelling on the Rhine as there has been this summer. At the end of the season, I had a visit from a Parisian *littérateur*, a M. St. Hilaire, belonging to the romantic school, who take it for granted that we Germans are particularly delighted with their productions, and ought to be thankful to them for having thrown off the old French classic style; which is however impossible, since their performances turn out so extremely trivial, and they give up precisely that which constitutes the peculiar excellence of the French literature (wit and subtlety), to hunt after that for which neither they nor their language have any aptitude. Wisdom and modesty would lead us to rejoice in what another can do, without forthwith coveting to do the same thing ourselves; it is moreover because a contrary course, or else a depreciation of foreign performances, is the most usual one, that an acquaintance with foreign literature does so much injury, and cripples talent. I say to the French, "once for all, you will never have a Goethe, but delight yourselves in him; we shall never have a Voltaire nor a Béranger, but I

take pleasure in them;" (do you know his for the most part seditious and sometimes wanton, but still genial "Chansons?") I hear that a faithful translation of Othello (in Alexandrines indeed) is just going to be performed at the Théâtre Français. Now this is a good thing;—but my literary friend means to bring a tragedy on the stage in which an angel appears to King Alphonso, and consoles him for the murder of a Jewish mistress, and that will be ridiculous.

The older, really liberal, literati regard this school with very unfriendly feelings, for in politics it professes the liberal creed, but by its Romanticism with respect to faith, places itself pretty much at the mercy of the Church. For the rest, it seems certain, that the priests do themselves infinite injury by their extravagant pretensions, and that the number of their opponents increases. According to St. Hilaire's account, the appointment of the present unfortunate ministry is explained by the report, that the clergy refused the Eucharist to the King except on this condition.

The peace will not be very fruitful in good results; infinite misery for the poor countries that were the seat of war, unredeemed by any prospects of a brighter future. Still I am glad of it, because our provinces will be spared the sufferings of war for the present, which would not have led, in the long run, to anything better. When one is getting old, it is perhaps wisest to wish that outward things may remain, on the whole, as they are.

One of the leaders of the English radicals has sent me a clever pamphlet written for the common people (price 3*d.*) in the *fourth stereotype edition*, the inflammatory tendency of which is shown still more by the vignette than the contents: a repulsively ugly woman, whose head-dress is composed of the crown and mitre combined, is feeding with a spoon a bloated child already deformed by over-feeding, while five starving and ragged children are standing below crying piteously for food, or sitting in sullen despair on the ground. This is in truth a picture of society in England: God grant that it may not come to this with us also!

I recommend Bourrienne's Memoirs warmly to you, dear Dora, if I have not done so already. There you see Napoleon as he was. The book is a Waterloo for his memory; the liberal journals too are as still as mice about it. On the other hand, my lectures have led me again to speak still more directly of the immortal Mirabeau; I should like to raise a monument to him. . . . .

CCCLXV.

BONN, *20th December*, 1829.

The revision of the second volume is at last rapidly approaching its conclusion. I have been terribly slow over this volume; the work was far more difficult than in the first, which related to general institutions, with the consideration of which I had often been able to occupy myself during my stay in Rome, where I was surrounded by objects calculated to throw light on them. The present volume treats of detached facts, with respect to which we have generally but very few external sources of correction; and arbitrary institutions, the traces of which are very scanty and indistinct. My time has not been spent in vain. I have freed the history from the year 260 (490 B. C.) onward, from all falsifications, and in its restored state it will no longer be liable to suspicion or accusation; there is not a single chasm left in the successive steps by which the constitution was developed; in fact, I think that no single question which might be suggested by intelligent reflection remains unanswered. But this I have only been able to attain very gradually; the most important points are the result of sudden flashes of light and divinations, with regard to which it often seriously crossed my mind, whether I had not been inspired by the spirits of the ancients, as a reward for my faithful efforts in behalf of their memory. But this I would on no account say to *any one* but yourself; besides, I do not say it in earnest *now*.

I have separated the principal legends from the annals which had become suspicious through their intermixture with

these, have restored them to their proper shape, and recovered the pure outline of the annals themselves. It is incredible how rich and uncorrupted they are. . . . .

CCCLXVI.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, 19*th February*, 1830.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will not require an account of the calamity which has befallen us. The history of the conflagration you have learnt through our friends. The whole lies already like a frightful dream beyond my historical remembrance.

You will know that the copy of the second volume, in which I had introduced a multitude of additions, was lost and has been recovered. This was a great consolation! The actual manuscript part, so far as the book had been entirely remodelled, or received extensive additions, has indeed been saved, as well as the sketch of the third volume. One sheet has been found too of the manuscript that was ready for press, and should have been sent off the next day. It is the introduction and first chapter. I shall begin with all energy to restore the missing portions as soon as I have finished cataloguing the books that are saved, for the insurance offices to make their estimates.

At first, my wife stood the shock of the misfortune,—of the fright and the severe cold to which she was exposed, half clothed, better than I had hoped. But afterwards the mournful task of looking over the articles we had saved, and which were in great part rendered useless, so affected her nerves and exhausted her strength, that the joyful feeling is now over, with which I had buoyed myself up for some months past, that her health was much better than usual at this time of year.

We have not lost heart, my old friend. Our thoughts are fixed upon the rebuilding of what has been destroyed, with enlargements and improvements, for the sake of which we look forward to the milder season with impatience. We

hope to be able to add a third story, which would afford me winter rooms with the sun, and a view over the town towards the Kreuzberg, and sideways towards the Siebengebirge.

The Holwegs have treated us in the most affectionate manner. God reward them for it. We have experienced many proofs of affection from all kinds of people; from such as we know to be friends, and from many who were almost strangers to us; from the towns-people too. The students have done every thing in their power, and richly rewarded my affection for them; by dint of inconceivable exertions, they have saved almost the whole of my library, though they were not able to prevent its suffering great injury. All the books in which I had written collations and emendations of importance are safe.

It is now my most ardent wish that we may be able to remove into our new house in the autumn, and remain in it many years. I could not conceive a better lot for the whole of our life, and would not ask for a happier life than that which I have led here since my return from Berlin in 1825; particularly during the glorious southern climate we had here in the years 1825 and 1826.

I have already told you that the printing of the second part should have begun immediately. It had been delayed just at last, and the printing of this volume, which would have been thicker than the first, would not have been finished before the autumn. I intended afterwards to take flight and visit Berlin, in order to see you, my dear friend, and the Crown Prince, and to convince the latter that it is not the long journey, nor yet caprice, that prevents my coming, but that I will not again be separated from my wife and children as I was that winter. Now, of course, the journey is out of the question. But I regret being compelled to give it up all the more, because any thing that thus excites and diverts the mind is such an extraordinary benefit and help, and my route would lie through Thuringia and Saxony. Hermann has behaved so frankly and nobly, and one of his favourite pupils, Professor Wunder, has attached himself so warmly to me, that I thought with pleasure of a day at Leipsic; and Goethe

too is still so fresh, that it would not have been too late to make his acquaintance. Are you not as thoroughly delighted as we are with his Correspondence with Schiller, and the new volume of the Travels in Italy? Goethe's greatness —in all its versatility and depth—shines forth beyond my expectations from the whole of this collection, and in his letters he is as great as Cicero. Schiller too I understand and like much better since reading these letters. You will remember, perhaps, that I did not share the idolatry of him, which was universally prevalent at one time; but that man had a thoroughly noble nature who was never rendered arrogant by such adoration, which exalted him far above Goethe, but willingly and cheerfully recognised the superiority of his friend, and paid him affectionate homage.

How barren and dumb is our literature now! How apathetic are all hearts! We, however, who know how to enjoy, are made much richer by these publications than we were thirty years ago, or our fathers fifty years ago. Thus it was with the Greeks after Alexander's time, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war.

CCCLXVII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, *4th August*, 1830.

I sit down to write to you to-day, as in the war times, when we sought intercourse in writing to our dearest friends, because the events happening around us made it impossible for us to pursue our ordinary occupations, though at the same time they made us lose sight of the personal affairs which form the usual subject of our communications. This will sound like an enigma to you, dearest Dora, as you will scarcely, if newspapers and letters reach you together, look into the former first, nor have heard already, through any other channel, what has come to our ears early this morning; viz., that an insurrection had broken out at Paris on the 27th and 28th of July, the issue of which was still quite undecided. If the newspapers have already been brought

to you, you will very likely learn at the same time that you receive this, what we shall not know till to-morrow. I scarcely think you will learn the decision as yet, but perhaps what may to some extent enable you to divine it. It is possible that the insurrection may be quelled by a massacre, if the troops of the line stand firm to the King, which seemed, however, doubtful on the 28th at noon; it is possible that they may join the people, and overpower the guards; it is possible the Court may take flight as after the 14th July, 1789, and even that the King may abdicate. In this case, the whole spell of royal power is dissolved, and the King will be as impotent as Louis XVI., and the best thing that could happen then would, undoubtedly, be the elevation of the Duke of Orleans to the throne. A new dynasty can begin its career with incomparably more authority than the old vanquished one. If the rebels get the upper hand, and the Court does not give way, we may expect that the Deputies now sitting at Paris will constitute themselves, form a government, and restore the National Guard. A happy result is in no case conceivable; no one will be carried away by a delirium of passionate sympathy and hope, as in 1789. Foreign powers will not be so mad as to interfere, but in the general ferment, any slight occasion may impel the French to begin a war.

The Protestant feeling of our King is the surest guarantee that he will not suffer himself to be implicated; for without fail Protestants will be murdered in the south. Austria has probably encouraged the government to venture on their bold attempts, but will scarcely have promised assistance. I will not deny that I should sooner have expected the sky to fall, than an insurrection to take place, and I was led to this opinion by the expressions of liberal Frenchmen. People of this party, who were certainly in a very good position for judging, confessed last autumn, that if the Polignac ministry had attempted a *coup d'état* immediately on its accession to power, at the same time not sparing money, anything might have been possible. The sentence "*le peuple a donné sa démission*" had become a proverb, and as there are now so

many families who have property to lose, and nobody builds castles in the air as in 1789, I decidedly believed that they would be able to muzzle the nation. I lamented the "*ordonnances*," because they introduced a detestable misrule, but that they would succeed *for the present* I did not doubt. I certainly thought it would only be for the present, that in the long run they could not be maintained, and even that the dynasty might probably fall in a few years; that is, if the priests went too far. The government have made a mistake in waiting for a year without checking the freedom of the press, and now all at once heaping everything together that was calculated to embitter and exasperate the people.

I remembered too, how easily the Parisians suffered themselves to be dispersed in October 1795, and how insignificant were the occurrences in June, 1820; and hence, I did not give them credit for allowing themselves to be so far excited by political feelings as to risk their lives. They have proved themselves more manly than I thought. The insult to the citizens of depriving them of the right to vote, hitherto obtained by taking out a license to trade,—the fear of retaining only a phantom of representation, which might be used to procure a sanction to the most odious decrees, and abhorrence of the priests, have all combined to drive the people to madness. This does not prove that they will hold out; if the troops of the line make a decisive advance, Paris will surrender. One of your first thoughts, dear Dora, on hearing of these events will be, that the greater part of our property is invested in France. If the liberals win the day, it is safe: to pay the State creditors is the interest and the system of this party: it could only be in danger if a civil war broke out.

We may hear the decision of the fate of Paris so early as to-morrow, and can hardly be without it longer than the day after. We have a daily post from Paris here, and learnt, on the twelfth, that Algiers had surrendered on the fifth.

In the midst of such engrossing excitement, I get on but

badly with composition; and I am already at least a quarter of this volume behind-hand with the materials I have to work out. For more than the last three weeks I had already found it very hard work, on account of the excessive and continuous heat. And now in September comes the annual review of the troops, and afterwards our removal. I long to finish this volume, not, as with the first, in order to see it before me a finished creation, but to have got rid of the arduous labour. When I look through the proof sheets now, I rejoice indeed in the richness of their contents, and the discoveries, through which the history of Rome, during a period when it seemed lost in impenetrable obscurity, has been fully restored, and established on a solid foundation; but I cannot believe that it will be an attractive work. Those who wish to find fault, and they are generally the majority, will find room for complaint that so many minutiæ and such an expenditure of research should be found in the history of a trivial age.

Have I told you lately that a very impertinent review of my history has appeared in the *Débats*, on occasion of the translation? No doubt by that empty sciolist Villemain, whose weak head has been turned by the plaudits of the public. One must try to become hardened against things of this kind. This man, like other fools who will make themselves heard, always goes back to the earliest times, and he in particular tells me it is nothing new to refuse to regard these as historical. These people are actually unable to understand, that the value of my exposition consists in my having shown why and how each circumstance has been invented. . . . .

CCCLXVIII.

BONN, *16th August*, 1830.

However strongly the present events excite the desire to interchange my thoughts with you, it is yet difficult to find the necessary leisure and quietness of mind, as I am obliged to prepare manuscript and correct proof sheets. I feel almost stupefied with all I have to attend to, and a letter which I was obliged to write a short time ago turned out so

badly in consequence, that I wish it had never been written. With you, dear Dora, I need not fear this; I do not shrink from your seeing me half asleep.

I was not quite unprepared for the way in which danger and calamity of all kinds are now everywhere breaking in. I have enjoyed the happiness of the years gone by, with the presentiment that it could not last. The revolution I did not expect; indeed, I thought it impossible. I expected individual calamities, such as the comparatively mild one which has befallen us, and the dreadful one which has befallen the Brandis family.* . . . .

If peace last, I think there is no fear but that our dividends will be paid us. The government will make extraordinary reductions in the budget, and although the bankers will assuredly not retain for ever such overweening influence as they now possess, in a representative state public opinion and self-interest will secure the payment of the dividends. A reduction to four per cent. will no doubt take place, and that is fair, and is occurring everywhere. If the cabinets were mad enough to engage in a war, then indeed both capital and interest would be endangered; and as, in all probability, the war would take the same course as that of the revolution, our property and our whole existence here would be abandoned to destruction. I do not know how far one can reckon upon the fact of the danger being so apparent; the impossibility of a result ought to strike all. The sovereigns may perhaps be led astray by the example of 1815; the rest of us, you at a distance, we on the frontiers, are not liable to this delusion. Simple people leave this unanswered, and are for ever harping upon one string,—the danger that threatens all Europe. Yes, in truth, danger does threaten; the revolution which had been defunct for years, has started into new and most vigorous life; in many respects, indeed, it is widely different from that of 1789, but still in essence it is the same, and armed with the same strength. But who can believe in

* In Kiel, where the brother-in-law of Professor Brandis lost his life, together with his son, in the burning of his house.

these days that it will be conquered because it is so fearful? Neither does it avail anything to curse those who have made it inevitable,—who have exorcised, and conjured till the spectre which they thought to lay, has risen out of the earth and annihilated them. I have delivered my sentiments on this subject publicly; on the impiousness of the jesuitico-aristocratic factions, which took their rise in 1821, and how they ought to be execrated; but it has been without effect. Still, every honest man, whose voice has any weight whatever, is bound to cry aloud against the sympathy and commiseration expressed for a fallen majesty.

I will not deny that I think the Parisians heroic, the moderation of the victors not simply theatrical, and the discretion of the deputies, even of the extreme Left, worthy of high respect. Everything has gone on better than in 1789, and by this it is evident that the nation has really improved. I only wish old Lafayette and echoes of him were out of the way!

That the scholars and literati among the French have changed, is shown by the way in which they receive the translation of my History. A second edition of it is in the press, although the first consisted of 1600 copies. Paris is the only place in which a regular course of lectures has been delivered on the work. They manage it rather awkwardly, but still show much goodwill.

I will leave off here to go out; the air does me good. If the revolution had not happened, in all human probability, in the course of this year, *i. e.* before August 1831, I should have gone to Berlin, and very likely to see you.

CCCLXIX.

BONN, *7th October*, 1830.

I have not been so long without writing to you since I can remember, dearest Dora; but neither have I experienced such a paralysis of the soul since 1806 and 1807, as during the last five or six weeks. Even in 1806 and 1807, when calamities we now only foresee had actually occurred, I did not feel so vulnerable to the strokes of fate as I do now.

We were childless, I was young and full of life; now I am old, shall probably in a few years leave a widow and children unprovided for behind me. . . . .

Since the loss of Belgium, the seat of war is brought within a few marches of us, and though everything is still perfectly quiet in our province, and all who have property recognise that their salvation depends on the maintenance of the existing order of things, we are notwithstanding threatened with an outbreak on the part of the populace, if an opportunity offer. Added to this, there are fears for the safety of our property since the outbreak of the revolt in Belgium. I have decided to sell more than two-thirds of our French stock, and to invest the price in various places, so that at all events we may not lose all with one blow; the rest I shall leave in France for the same reason. No man can advise himself or others with certainty in such cases. My uneasiness about these affairs is certainly no mean love of money, but a most justifiable anxiety on the part of the father of a family, in such times; as also the other question—how to invest the money. I have resolved to dispose of a part of it in Russian bonds and certificates. I have decided to take these upon conviction, because we cannot conceal from ourselves, that while all these movements may add to the overthrow of Germany, they will extend the dominion of Russia, and because this power, invulnerable from without, finds support within from the size of its population, grows yearly, and will always be able to bear a much heavier national debt than her present one. This is not a question of sentiment but of facts, and upon these I act. The Norwegian funds are likewise now no contemptible property, as there is, perhaps, no State less threatened with war, and, after the example of Holland, Sweden will, no doubt, perceive that it is her policy to give way, if Norway should wish to loosen still more the bond between them.

The fate of our town, in case of war, situated as it is between two fortresses, I need not picture to you. For we cannot deceive ourselves as to the fact, that the war would be disastrous to us, that we should be driven back, since a

great part of Germany, far from supporting us, would receive the French with open arms. Our resting-place will therefore not remain here in that case; and I have made up my mind to our leaving, as soon as the war breaks out. It would then certainly be a great pity that we have the house. Meanwhile, whenever I go into it and see how beautiful it looks in its new condition, it has such a charm upon me, that I should bring myself to give it up with great difficulty.

I have breathed more freely for the last two days, because I have finished the preface to the second volume. I cannot describe what a torture it was to me to be obliged to compose every week manuscript sufficient for two printers' sheets, not to speak of correcting the press, in this state of anxiety and depression, and with my thoughts so differently occupied. The printing might have been delayed, but Reimer was urgent that the book should be finished in October, and I too was anxious to bring it to an end. I am conscious that the part which has been written since the 1st of August, betrays the state of mind in which it has been produced, while the first two-thirds may, perhaps, be considered as a successful effort, notwithstanding the dryness of the subject-matter. I have said this in the preface, as also that my hopes of following it up with a third volume after a short interval of rest, had been frustrated by the unhappy state of public affairs.*

My expressions about the impending future, its retrogression towards barbarism, the flight of the sciences and Muses, will be recognised by posterity as the view of an unprejudiced contemporary; at present they will raise the clamours of the dazzled multitude. Very few know whither

* "At another season the delay [in the printing of this volume] would have had no influence on the execution of my work: but only two-thirds of it were completed when the madness of the French court burst the talisman which kept the demon of the revolution in bonds. The remainder has been written under a feeling that it was a duty not to leave what I had begun unfinished, amid constant efforts to repel the harassing anxiety ever pressing upon me from the prospect of the ruin which menaced my property, my dearest possessions, and my happiest ties. The first volume was written when everything was smiling around me, and I was thankfully and heartily enjoying it in the most perfect unconcern about the future. Now, unless God sends us some

they desire to go; the greater number start up and run headlong away, like people taking a walk who only want to give themselves exercise; they are completely under the influence of declamation and visionary ideas; yet among them are honourable men, and even authors of talent.

While I was lamenting over these infatuated revolutionists, I received a bullying letter from *, because having occasion to write to him, I had freely declared that this resuscitation of the revolution was entirely to be ascribed to the priestly party and a perverse aristocracy. He flies at me as if he would tear me to pieces for "seeing such phantoms and defending the liberals." There is a priestly aristocratic party here, small in numbers, but which has a nest in Coblentz, by which he suffers himself to be befooled. However dear the friendship of any man may be to me, I cannot purchase its continuance at the sacrifice of truth.

Gretchen has a good thought about our emigration, if it *must* be; to turn our steps to Halle, where we have a friend in Bluhme, and have also other acquaintances.

After the perfect apathy which reigned as long as the great tendencies which were the precursors of present events might have been calmly set forth, is there now with you, who have nothing to fear for yourselves, the same universal exulting garrulity on the course of public events, which prevailed forty years ago? Here, even the liberals, with few exceptions, are full of anxiety, and many judge very sagaciously. Political follies have had little influence so far. A state of prosperity is hardly possible in France, even if peace lasts: if war comes, there can be no security for anything in the general breaking up. It is all over with the Imperial party, but it cannot be absolutely affirmed that

miraculous help, we have to look forward to a period of destruction similar to that which the Roman world experienced about the middle of the third century of our era,—to the annihilation of prosperity, of freedom, of civility, of knowledge. Still even though barbarism should for a long season scare the Muses and learning entirely away, a time will come when Roman history will again be an object of attention and interest, though not in the same manner as in the fifteenth century."—Preface to the second volume of the History of Rome. (Hare and Thirlwall's Translation.)

republican anarchy may not lead back to the Duke of Bordeaux.

No one can deny that the people of Brunswick and Hesse Cassel have right on their side, in the main also, the people of Dresden; but with them the imitation of the French is already grievous and disgraceful; the risings of the peasantry are horrible.

The absence of every kind of joy, hope, and illusion is a peculiar feature in these revolutions, particularly that in France, as compared with 1789. Every thing bears the impress of age and decrepitude; the aged Lafayette, who still dreams that he is in the olden times, stands like a spectre in the midst. There is much more self-consciousness than there was then; the lowest rabble have their eyes bent on their own immediate advantage. Forms are a matter of indifference, except to a few young visionaries. It is very possible that such a dissolution of society as that in South America may take place even in France. The mercantile class, heartily as it detests the priesthood, would be only too glad if the revolution had never happened. I held it to be impossible, because I knew that the upper classes thought of nothing but their own advantage, and cherished no dreams. It was to be foreseen that they could never expose themselves to the bullets, and so it has turned out; they have let loose the mob, and in Paris it has behaved not only with heroic courage, but, for a mob, most admirably. The misery and the scarcity of food are now indescribable, and things cannot improve.

We have passed several days in immediate anxiety. Now we have our garrison again. The day on which the news of the insurrection at Aix-la-Chapelle reached Bonn was horrible; just like the air before an approaching storm, or, in the south, before an earthquake, when all animals are full of terror. On the previous evening, similar tidings had come from Liège; at nine in the morning they came from Aix-la-Chapelle; an hour after, a fellow stood up here in one of the squares and exhorted the mob to insurrection; the populace eyed us of the higher ranks with looks of defiance

and scorn; in the afternoon, we learnt that a disturbance had broken out at Cologne. Our house is opposite to a large manufactory, whose master is universally hated, from which we are only separated by a broad open street, and moreover we had neither a garrison nor a national guard, nor any one who knew how to form one. For the present we are quite safe. We shall remove into our new house in a fortnight at furthest, unless great changes take place between now and then. The repairs are very nearly completed. . . . .

CCCLXX.

TO SAVIGNY.

BONN, *16th November*, 1830.

. . . . The preface expresses my views about the future, with that strict correspondence with my thoughts, which I always endeavour to observe. It is my firm conviction that we, particularly in Germany, are rapidly hastening towards barbarism, and it is not much better in France.

That we are threatened with devastation, such as that two hundred years ago, is, I am sorry to say, just as clear to me, and the end of the tale will be, despotism enthroned amidst universal ruin. In fifty years, and probably much less, there will be no trace left of free institutions or the freedom of the press throughout all Europe, at least on the Continent. Very few of the things which have happened since the revolution in Paris, have surprised me. Before the revolution, a Frenchman had started the question in a newspaper, what I should say to Cæsar's death?

I am just sending this reply to him; "As I do about the *ordonnances;* submission was impossible, and yet both now and then, it was a calamity that the attempt succeeded." You will not find this paradoxical. . . . .

[The following extracts from some of Niebuhr's letters written about this time, are given in the Lebensnachrichten, without a date:]

In my opinion, what constitutes a royalist, is to believe

that the State is no arbitrary association;—that the whole is before the parts;—that government is of God;—that government is the first necessity, and that government and liberty must be combined;—that they may be so under the most diverse forms;—that forms which set bounds to the pretensions of the mass of mediocrity are salutary; those which do not, intrinsically bad;—that attempts to alter the constitution by insurrection, are not merely irrational, but criminal. And on all these grounds I can acquiesce in the mistaken measures of the aristocracy, although I am often keenly alive to their errors. But if I am required to acknowledge any tyranny as sacred, and to pronounce every endeavour to break the yoke, rebellion, even where commanded by the most urgent distress, I cannot yield my assent; and when I see folly and ignorance at the helm of affairs it rouses my indignation, and I do not conceal my sentiments.

Our disease is far too deeply seated to be removed by mere changes in the constitution: for, from no change made in these times, and by the men of this generation, can we venture to hope for that legislation, which might bring us into a healthful and progressive condition, by transforming our habits and our entire social circumstances. What we want, is as certain and clear to me as my own existence, and to a great extent I could express it, but it were to talk to the winds, and I do not choose to be dragged through the mire to no purpose. "They have Moses and the prophets," and hear them not. Were I in power, I would act, and with vigour, in God's name, even if it brought danger to myself.

Many royalists are not so in the same sense as I and my fellow-thinkers; they regard that as admirable and praiseworthy, which we only defend as necessary in principle, without denying that in the actual state of things it often works very ill; and, therefore, while we maintain that if it fall, everything must go to ruin, yet, we prophesy that

no human power can uphold it, unless a reform take place, and a new life be infused into it. For example, we say there must be an aristocracy, indeed, an aristocracy of many grades; but we add, at this moment there is no tolerable aristocracy existing, and that which calls itself such, is a phantom from which all vital energy has fled. The other party are satisfied with this aristocracy as it is, and fancy it is only necessary to compel obedience. We say, make proper regulations, and obedience will not be wanting if a good example is set to the people. They think to accomplish all by repression, and we demand free scope for movement, in conformity with the law. We say, when the governments understand their vocation of ruling, the subjects will soon return to theirs of obeying. And so on without end.

In this, our two parties (if I may so call them) agree, that revolution is rebellion, and that of the most ruinous kind that can befall a nation; and likewise, that we despise the liberals beyond all expression for their shallowness and wickedness. But I do not thereby abrogate my conviction that it is only the despotism now inseparable from it, owing to the monstrosity of the ruling ideas of the present day, which renders revolution so utterly execrable, that it can bring forth nothing but evil, and that a sensible man ought to risk everything even for a bad government, sooner than submit to it. My conviction is, that ere the despotism of liberalism became all-powerful, there were perfectly justifiable revolutions, in which one power was victorious in the struggle with the usurpations of another power, as in England and the Netherlands. Lastly, that tyranny, under all circumstances and in all ages, remains tyranny; and that where this exists, nature takes her course, though under our present conditions, that course can lead to nothing but slavery. Many good men call such principles dangerous, and although they may be far from mistaking the motives of one who maintains them (like myself, who in order not to acquire an unmerited reputation, have fully developed them in my report to the government) yet they cannot help feeling a little terror at his

openness and temerity. This may make it clear in what sense I am an unconditional, true, and faithful royalist, and that I have not swerved in the least from the principles of which I am an avowed adherent.

Had I lived in ancient Rome, and had it been possible for a Tribune to propose such a regeneration of the State as the short-sighted people of our day desire, I would have helped to strike him dead in God's name; and if I lived in a State where one constitutional element of the whole was injuriously repressed, whether it were the democratic, or a truly aristocratic element, I would strain every nerve to give it fair play, and put it in possession of its rights.

With us Germans, aristocracy can never become so sickening as a superficial liberalism. The hot fever has burnt itself out, like a plague that at last vanishes spontaneously; still we shall have repose, and be able to return to the quiet life of our grandfathers, who were not indeed, like ourselves, threatened with a barbarian yoke.

Constitutional forms are of no use among an enervated or foolish nation. What avails the choice of representatives, when there are no men fit to represent the people? Is it answered, "let them learn by practice;" that is, indeed, to sport with the gravest matters. I say; give them free communal institutions, and let them, in the first instance, learn by practice within a sphere with which they are acquainted. Believe me (but that *you* know already), I know how to prize a free constitution, and am certainly better acquainted than most with its meaning and worth; but, of all things, the first and most essential is, that a nation should be manly, unselfish, and honourable. If it is that, free laws will grow up of themselves by degrees.

CCCLXXI.

TO MOLTKE.

End of November, 1830.

. . . . Instead of the she-wolf, there now stands in the room which I have taken for myself, a bust which must be familiar to your remembrance of Paris in 1790, which you have probably possessed yourself, the mention of which will call up that whole period to your mind,—Mirabeau, by Houdon. I do not know if it has reached your ears, that I gave a course of lectures last year, on the History of the Revolution. On that occasion I read the "Opinions et Travaux," and my heart beat so strongly for the demon, the mightiest of all the men whose lifetime has coincided with my own, that I commissioned a person in Paris to purchase his bust for me. It was not to be found; no one inquires for it now, just as no one now *reads* this Demosthenes. A full half year passed before my commissioner was able to hunt up a replastered, varnished copy; but even this is valuable to me. Now the fact that Mirabeau had vanished from the eyes and the thoughts of the people, was a proof to me that the revolution was done with; and I inferred this still more decisively, from the manifest certainty that no one cherished any longer those hopes of better, if not golden times, by the dreams of which our youth was buoyed up; and who could have thought it possible that in an utterly unpoetical age,—one like that which Petronius paints, when men, if they sacrificed at all, offered gold in ingots to the gods, to spare the cost of moulding it,—people would risk wealth and comfort in order to wreak their anger? It is so, nevertheless, and I have been a false prophet; but it must be allowed that it was insane conduct which drove the people mad with intolerable oppression; and even as it is, the result has been very different from that which took place in those years of youthful enthusiasm. Tremendous catastrophes have come to pass, and there is no resistance, not a semblance of great men, no joy or enthusiasm, no hopes for the future;—except that the time will one day come, when,

by means of mutual instruction, every peasant boy shall be able to read. The truth of the thing is the unveiled destitution of the populace, who are resolved to bear it no longer; and this again paves the way for a revision of property; which is not, indeed, something new under the sun, but has been unheard of for centuries past, and even now seems quite inconceivable to our politicians, who have set property in the place of God, in the Holiest of Holies. We have fallen into the state of Rome after the times of the Gracchi, with all its horrors, and he who cannot see this is blind; he who thinks the question has anything to do with freedom is a fool; forms will no longer hold things together, we shall bless despotism if it protects our lives, as the Romans blessed that of Augustus. That it was possible for reasonable men to do this, I had comprehended long ago; now, it is perfectly, vividly, clear to me; and now I also understand Catiline.

This would be mournful enough if it only affected our contemporaries in foreign lands, and we were able to retain those good things of life which Livy, Horace, and Virgil enjoyed after the battle of Actium, and through whose possession they were able to keep their minds serene and fit for creative efforts; namely, security, leisure, the power and splendour of the State. But in our poor Germany, hopeless confusion is breaking forth in all directions, and delivering us unarmed and defenceless into the hands of our hereditary enemy, who is already revenging himself by insolence and scorn, for the short time during which he has lain bound, and broods over no less a design than the restoration of his tyranny, and the sacking of all neighbouring countries. I could have resigned myself to the dissolution of the present order of things, though it would bring a miserably inefficient set of men into the place of those who now hold the reins of government, and set before them a far more difficult task, but that it would inevitably lead to the wreck of our independence amidst the fearful storms of war.

And let no one delude himself with the idea that, at all events, free constitutions would spring from the convulsion:

it will lead very quickly to an absolute military despotism, which will scarcely trouble itself with outside decencies even so much as that of Napoleon. In Holstein also the people are already beginning to agitate. These men are perhaps still greater strangers to you than to me. Respecting the enterprise and its consequences there can be no difference of opinion between us, except of a little more or less indulgence. God help us to endure what we cannot avert! Gretchen asked me lately in earnest, whether I still, as in the time of Napoleon, thought of going to North America. "If it were not for the children," whom I would rather see Germans, even under a Russian rule than Anglo-Americans! Farewell, dear friend. Shall we not see each other again somewhere? You have never answered my invitation to the Rhine, and now that is out of the question. Remember me to your sons; I have received Magnus's circular; wish him success in my name. My wife sends her kindest regards to you; she braces herself up to bear what is inevitable.

Your old NIEBUHR.

CCCLXXII.

TO PERTHÈS.

BONN, 17*th December*, 1830.

. . . . 3. The sudden demand for my old translation of the Philippic is as inexplicable to me as to you. I cannot have the slightest objection to your republishing it: instead of the dedication, which is now inapplicable, I should like you to insert after the title page what is written on the enclosed sheet.*

With this, my answer to your inquiries is ended, and now comes my turn.

1. I thank you very much for sending me the further parts that have appeared of your great series of historical works. Stenzel's book treats indeed of a field which I have explored less than any other, but so far as I may

* Published in his "Nachgelassene Schriften." The last words he ever wrote for publication.

presume to express a judgment notwithstanding, I think it very excellent, and hope it will be received as it deserves.

2. You know Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia, to which Sir J. Macintosh's, Sir Walter Scott's, &c. historical works belong. In the same collection will appear the History of Greece up to Alexander, by my translator, Thirlwall. It will be no erudite work, but the work of a truly erudite and intellectual man. Before the outbreak of the revolution, I begged the author to send me proof sheets, which Classen should translate under my eye; I intended to add a preface and a continuation up to the Roman period. We had agreed to offer you the work, my dear friend: I wished that something of consequence from my hand should be published by Perthès, and your fellow-citizen Classen had the same feeling. Thirlwall very modestly declined sending the sheets to me, saying that they were not worth the trouble. Under other circumstances, I should boldly advise a publisher to get the book as soon as it appears (which is so easy in Hamburgh), and to announce that a translation of it by Classen would appear with a preface and a continuation. But now, I cannot promise you a continuation; if we are fugitives, where shall we find a secure resting-place where I could work? And now will you venture the announcement with the addition "in case I should not be prevented" from giving the continuation? And send for the book? And how much could you afford to pay Classen for it? Under other circumstances it would be an uncommonly good article, for there is at present no book of the kind at all.

3. My burdened heart would fain relieve itself by some admonitions to the Germans, at which your last letter hints: prudence counsels silence,—says it would make little impression. If I write, and am satisfied with my performance, I shall send it to you. Never has Germany been so treacherous to herself as now; and since the revolution in Poland, not only has salvation through our own efforts become impossible, but even for a miracle there is no place left, which is always indispensable before a miracle can interfere in the course of earthly affairs. . . . .

CCCLXXIII.

TO MADAME HENSLER.

BONN, 19*th December*, 1830.

. . . . I do not mean to question that the administration of justice is in a bad condition, but the multiplicity of the systems is the least part of the evil; the most lamentable circumstance is the character of the judges themselves, who seem to have laid aside the old characteristics of their order. This is the case wherever you inquire; the old severe gravity has vanished from the tribunals, whose members for the most part simply endeavour, like other officials, to expedite the work allotted to them with as little trouble as possible, and have no conscientious feeling that they ought to administer *the Right*—an idea which is quite foreign to the professors of jurisprudence. I by no means wish to do away with Codes of law altogether; I should rejoice to see a complete revision of the existing system of laws in Holstein, but the reformers would not be satisfied with this. They want one single new Code, when they talk of Chambers, just as they want an entirely new representation, and such a Code cannot possibly succeed. There is no human being who could frame it. And, above all, from a Code of criminal law, may God preserve every country! even if the jury were not to be immediately introduced in criminal cases, which is however an immediate consequence of the principles of these people. You have no doubt received the copies of my History, and read at the least the preface in your own copy. This has created a sensation of which I had not the least idea, when I was writing down the statements of my convictions, or, perhaps, I might have omitted it. It has roused a clamour, not only among those who rejoice in disturbances and destruction, and already regard as rebellion any lamentations over the state of things which they promote, at least with their wishes, but also among those who do not like to think the evil quite so great as it is, and many who do me the honour

to think themselves wiser than I. What is said of me behind my back rarely comes to my ears, but I have accidentally heard something of it which makes me very indignant. It is said that I cannot bear that any one should differ from me in opinion. This is not true; on the contrary, no one can in practice more completely concede to others the liberty to have what opinion they choose: I condemn none, and defend—how often—the sentiments of my greatest opponents. But I require that no one should take the liberty of blaming me for having my own, especially on subjects into which I have more insight, and on which I can form a better judgment than those who set themselves up for wiser, and who allow me no voice whatever in things belonging to their sphere. Meanwhile, I have a rich compensation in the unlimited approbation of Hermann, who is equally convinced with me that the present tendency of the world is towards barbarism.

My sadness, quite apart from the misfortune which is impending over us personally, is caused by the degeneracy of our nation, no less than by the prospect of its servitude and devastation. It is impossible not to perceive that the noble qualities which were the glory of our nation are disappearing —depth, sincerity, originality, heart, and affection,—that shallowness and impudence are becoming universal. This cannot be charged upon the circumstances of the times; things are pursuing an ordinary course, such as other nations have witnessed before; and if there were nothing else, I should calmly work on for other ages, from which a book written now cannot be quite kept back, even if Germany should be desolated by Hunnish ravages. But when we contemplate the present, when we look at the tiger in the west waiting with glaring eyes to pounce upon his prey; and at the tone of feeling pervading all Germany (with the exception, for the most part, of our old provinces), which furthers the design of the enemy, dissolves all bonds, makes resistance impossible, opens outstretched arms to the French! "Give us freedom," say they, "and we are ready to withstand the foreigner:" but their freedom is chaos, and the sway of

madmen or fools; and since their demands neither can nor will be granted, and there is no great man living to win the people to himself and carry them away with him, to all human foresight, the loss of the left shore of the Rhine to France, the inundation of the rest of Germany by French hordes, the destruction of the existing States, and the formation of servile republics under the guidance of traitors, has become quite inevitable after the insurrection of the Poles. I will not blame these latter; the blame is due in the first place to the absurdity of forming them into a State, organising their armies, and then sending them a ruler, who would have driven the mildest nation to despair. But while we lay no blame on them, and under other circumstances might even rejoice to see their revolt, he must be a wrong-headed man, who would not now think of the salvation of Germany in the first place.

The French are always talking of defence, and their whole line of conduct points to attack; and in Germany no voice is raised to exclaim that *no one has threatened them;* the most that has been shown is a determination not to suffer them to seize on Belgium. The German press is only an echo *against* Germany! How willingly would they seek a pretext against Prussia, who does not, however, afford them the least, yet the "Correspondent" repeats the lying statement of an English journal, that the execution of the "bloody work" of subjugating Belgium was assigned to Prussia! It would lighten my heart to write; the effort to smother my feelings quite deadens my faculties; but if no great result could be expected, it would be a piece of knight-errantry to come forward singly. I have written a few words which may at least find an echo in the hearts of well-disposed but undecided persons, by way of preface to a reprint of the oration of Demosthenes, which Perthès wishes for: a demand has suddenly arisen for it in South Germany, and all the copies in stock have been sold.

The Russian bonds have received a great shock, which may lead to very bad consequences. Neither has the French credit been strengthened by the extension of French power,

for further revolutions are, I think, inevitable. What a change within five months! What a conclusion for this year! how will the next end? God protect you, my beloved Dora, and us! You will find a refuge I trust. Give our love to all our friends and relations. Most likely I shall not write to you again in the old year. You will, I hope, pass a tolerably merry Christmas in spite of every thing; I wish you may skim over a little of my book during the holidays. I embrace you tenderly once more in the old year.

Your old NIEBUHR.

ON THE CHARACTER OF NIEBUHR.

BY PROFESSOR BRANDIS, OF BONN,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE ARISTOTELIAN PHILOSOPHY," ETC.

NIEBUHR was considered passionate, and his feelings, his predilections, and his dislikes were, no doubt, expressed with a warmth, or rather a vehemence, which, untempered by deliberation, could not fail either to carry all before it, or to hurt the feelings of others. Not alone the narrow-minded or ill-disposed, who might feel themselves justly rebuked, but men of nobler nature were often wounded by his passing ebullitions of temper, or the sharpness of his expressions. Even his most valued friends did not escape these passionate outbursts, which for the moment were deeply felt. Still it can be affirmed, that he never inflicted a deadly wound on friendship; the shaft that pierced knew in like measure how to heal, not by explanations, too often fruitless, but by proofs of love, which, in general, followed speedily and unsought, and were therefore indescribably touching His anger was easily borne, even when unjust, or partly unfounded, because it was but the transient flash of an inward fire, which otherwise could not have shone forth so brightly in good-will and friendship.

It was the same with the love and hatred which were

evident in his judgments on the past, and on the present, from which he was personally remote. To a man of his deep and strong feelings, it was impossible to observe and judge the occurrences of social life with the same coolness and impartiality as the necessary sequence of natural events. Great and noble sentiments, or eminent powers of mind, filled him with love and admiration; narrow and interested motives or aims, arrogant little-mindedness or vanity, he despised and disliked, whether they met his eye in the present or the past. His indignation against a Xenophon was as ardent as though he had even now left a noble fatherland to its fate, in times of heavy need, and had nevertheless attained a false fame; for whether it was the present or the past against which Niebuhr's anger was directed, it never arose from selfish considerations, wounded vanity, or an envious wish to detract. No one could more thoroughly and cheerfully appreciate excellence of every kind; no one could value those excellences more highly in which, often through a touching self-depreciation, he thought himself deficient. But the injustice of contemporaries or posterity hurt, nay exasperated him, as being at once the ungrateful disparagement of well-founded claims, the sign of a despicable want of independent judgment, and the hindrance to all lasting influence. To confound good and evil, to place great and small things on the same level, was absolutely repulsive to his nature, whether it were the result of a deficiency in warmth of feeling, or in the acuteness of the moral sense; for he was firmly convinced that only where the bad, the impure, and the base, are alike

hated and despised, can the great and noble be truly reverenced and loved, and thus exert a purifying and elevating influence on the character. Hence he placed his standard, with regard to the formation of opinion, far higher than most men; earnestness of mind, he considered, ought to be shown, above all things, in pronouncing a judgment, that the faculty of judging might be thereby developed. Inconsiderate or hasty expressions with regard to remarkable men or events, he did not easily allow to pass uncensured.

It was impossible for Niebuhr, so thoroughly pervaded by moral earnestness, to contemplate history otherwise than from the centre of his own nature, and he looked upon the actual relations of life from the same point of view. To be misunderstood or depreciated affected him deeply; and however ready he might be to admit contradiction, those truths which he had once grasped with living conviction, became portions of himself, and were as sacred in his eyes as moral and religious principles, with which, indeed, they were always more or less bound up in his mind; certainly they always had their origin in the pure love of truth. How frequently he tested them, and how readily he relinquished those which would not bear re-examination, is most fully proved by the second, and by parts even of the third edition of his History of Rome. What classical work has ever undergone so searching a revision? But contradiction which, without a thorough examination of the subject, opposed mere assertion to convictions which he had founded on deep research—a setting up of bare possibilities, without real insight into

the conditions, through which alone they could have come to pass—wounded him bitterly, especially when accompanied by arrogance. It wounded him because it implied a refusal to recognise the conscientious earnestness of his investigations, and because it deprived those truths which he believed himself to have established, of the reception which he desired for them, on behalf of science.

It is not surprising that he now and then adhered with some obstinacy to opinions not so important nor so well-grounded, but this never arose from dislike to acknowledge error, nor from petty vanity. On the contrary, as he never adopted or expressed an opinion without the most careful examination and thorough mastery of all the facts relating to it, he could not give it up until it had received the most complete refutation. It was kept firm in his mind by the same profound love of truth from which it had originally proceeded, until a higher truth had dawned upon his sight. Men of more flexible intellect find it easier to sacrifice their earlier sentiments; but are not their views, for this very reason, deficient in completeness and power? Besides, it must be remembered that Niebuhr's opinions were most intimately connected with, and organically dependent upon, each other, so that if one were given up, its successor must equally be brought into due relation to what remained behind; while his more important principles were of a kind that could scarcely be renounced, but, at most, only undergo modification. Such a habit of mind could exist only in one whose convictions were ever present to him as a whole; it was

at least the chief cause why Niebuhr almost invariably attained a higher insight by his own efforts, rarely by the aid of others, though a well-timed suggestion would quickly rouse him to fresh researches. Another cause lay in his early habit of resorting immediately to the fountain-heads, without availing himself of the labours of his predecessors. Nothing less than that incredible mastery over his materials, which he derived from an almost unexampled grasp and certainty of memory, combined with the most brilliant reflective powers, could justify him in despising aids, which are indispensable to a less comprehensive and original mind. It was not indeed so much that he despised them, as that he seldom had occasion to make use of them. Up to his seventeenth year, the classical authors had formed almost his sole reading, and he was already as much at home in their world, as most learned men in their mature years. He next turned with like eagerness to modern science and literature, to which he was led by an intimate acquaintance with Dante. He followed modern history through all its details; for him it reflected a light over the records of the past, and drew forth electric sparks from every pebble on the shore of antiquity; nay more, it gave an early maturity to his judgment, and he was not carried away by the intoxication of the French Revolution, because he clearly comprehended the nature and conditions of freedom in ancient times, and the necessity of introducing it step by step, and not by sudden leaps. From his residence in England and Scotland, and his active participation in public business, sometimes of an important nature,

he gained a practical view of affairs in which the merely learned historian so often fails. He was so fully engaged in official life, from his twenty-second or twenty-third year, to the year 1810, that he could scarcely devote more than his hours of relaxation to study. No leisure remained for researches with an extensive apparatus of learning, but he attained the same end, without fixed purpose, simply by applying his practical knowledge of circumstances and affairs to history, and never resting until he was able to form as distinct and vivid a picture of those portions of history, which had most attracted his interest, as men in general retain only from the experience of the present.

Had he kept to the ordinary track, had he combined the study of the original sources with an examination of the principal attempts to inspire them with fresh life, he might still indeed have found single facts confirming or modifying his representations, but he would scarcely have opened a new career to historical investigation. Other great scholars before him have treated of the history of Rome; other adepts in political science have made it their study, and how warmly, how gratefully were the labours of Machiavelli, Gronovius, Perizonius, Montesquieu and Gibbon, acknowledged by Niebuhr! His claim to be the pioneer of a new path in science, rests upon the fact, that he threw broad flashes of light across the darkness that veiled the early history of Italy;—that he espied a thread of truth in the tissue of fictions and embellishments, detected history in legends, and marked out the respective domains of the legendary and the historical;—that from the

scanty and unconnected details belonging to history, he was able to draw clear and correct outlines, by displaying their relation to each other; finally, that by a close comparison of the results thus obtained with analogous conditions of society in periods better known, he gradually filled up these outlines till they presented a picture that spoke to the heart and mind of his readers. And we may fairly say that the opening of this new path has been, and will be, productive of still greater results than even the important discoveries to which it conducted Niebuhr, and by which he proved its correctness. It is a path which cannot be closed again to science, however many may be the stumbling-blocks it presents to those who attempt to pursue it with ill-trained powers, who set apparent, in the place of real possibilities guaranteed by striking analogies,—external resemblances in the place of internal relations, and mistake fortuitous conceptions for views founded on a consideration of facts.

We leave it to those better fitted for the task, to define the nature and value of Niebuhr's method of treating history, and its influence on the present state of historical research and opinion. As we confine ourselves within the limits of a biographical sketch, it is enough for us simply to bring into view whatever may tend to exhibit the peculiar features of his mind.

A more comprehensive and trustworthy memory, or greater control over it, can scarcely have been possessed by Joseph Scaliger, and other heroes of mnemonics; it certainly was never combined in any instance with clearer powers of reflection. Niebuhr was a close

observer, and found some connecting link between all the manifold external and internal perceptions which came before him; hence he mastered languages and sciences, signs and the thing signified, with equal ease, and with such certainty, that with his mind's eye he saw each in its own individuality, separate from its fellows, and yet intimately and variously related to them. No sufficient explanation of his memory is furnished either by the pretended laws of the association of ideas, or of the reproduction of representations, or by any logical dependence among the ideas themselves. It was equally retentive of perceptions and thoughts, of views and feelings, of sights and sounds; whatever came within the sphere of his recognition took up its due relative position in his mind with equal certainty and precision.

A great part of the Greek and Roman poetry had imprinted itself so indelibly on his memory, that he could frequently recite hundreds of verses without stumbling, and could answer on the spot every allusion or quotation from the Latin poets in the notes and letters of the younger Valckenaer, who was most deeply read in those authors; even in his later years he retained every poem which appealed strongly to his heart, whether it were a modern Greek or Servian ode, or a song of Goethe, Count Platen, or others. In his later years, at least, we scarcely think that he ever learnt anything by heart; whenever a poetical thought which had vividly seized upon his mind was clothed in the form perfectly adapted to it, both the form and its inner spirit implanted themselves firmly

within him, without the necessity of any mechanical assistance.

When a youth, Niebuhr had made himself master of French, and, perhaps, still more completely, of English, and wrote and spoke both languages with great fluency and correctness. In his riper manhood, while the cares and occupations of the fatal years of war were undermining his health, he learned several of the principal dialects of the Sclavonic languages; in his fortieth year, he began to write and speak Italian, in which, up to this time, he had read nothing but historical works and poetry; and, with a rapidity that put his younger companion to shame, he acquired no slight command of this language, at the very time when he was accustoming himself to a new sphere of action, and devoting his leisure to antiquarian and historical researches. During his residence in Edinburgh, he had occupied himself with the natural sciences, particularly chemistry, but had never afterwards found time or opportunity to pursue these studies; yet in subsequent years he was able to form the most distinct conception of out-of-the way or complicated details, to the astonishment of men versed in the subject. Hence he was strongly interested in the natural sciences of antiquity. The meteorology, natural history, &c., of Aristotle, the botany of Theophrastus, and the ancient writers on agriculture, were perfectly familiar to him. His memory was no less certain and comprehensive with regard to impressions of sight and numbers. As referee of the consular business, at the Danish Board of Trade, he once gave a very detailed report, full of calculations, without the

slightest hesitation, though, as his neighbour remarked, he had brought with him by mistake, instead of his notes, a paper which had nothing to do with the matter in hand. But even numbers did not imprint themselves on his memory mechanically, but because the facts expressed by them were never destitute of some point of connexion with other facts, within the wide compass of his historical and practical sphere of vision. Thus, too, the statistics of the finances, at least of the more important States, were so present to his mind, that he not unfrequently predicted great alterations in the paper currency with an accuracy most surprising to financiers and the thinking men engaged in trade.

ON THE CHARACTER OF NIEBUHR AS AN HISTORIAN.

FROM A LETTER BY PROFESSOR LOEBELL, OF BONN, AUTHOR OF A "UNIVERSAL ANCIENT HISTORY," ETC.

. . . . You request me to furnish you with Niebuhr's characteristics, as an historian, within the compass of a few pages. This compels me to content myself with indicating some of the most important points, for the development and establishment of which, a small book would be necessary.

When great men step forth as the authors of a revolution in their peculiar department of science, and as the discoverers of new paths, on which others follow them, it generally is because they have been the first to recognize in its true depth and significance, some want, vague indications of which have already betrayed themselves in the great tendencies of the age, and to supply which, they bring the eye and the gifts of genius.

At the period when Niebuhr took up the idea of re-investigating and remodelling the history of Rome, certain movements and aspirations had developed themselves in two provinces of intellectual activity, which could not fail to exert great influence on historiography. These provinces were classical philology, and politics; that is, the internal civil life of a people.

In classical philology, within the last ten years of the preceding century, there had grown up in Germany a new method of criticism, which for boldness, acuteness, and delicacy, was superior to all that had gone before it. This found its earliest manifestation, and one that excited the greatest attention, in the famous disquisitions of Wolf, concerning the origin and authors of the Homeric songs. In its wider and more general application, this method of criticism led to the conviction, that even the authority of ancient testimony is not sufficient to determine the author and the date of a work, unless it coincides with internal signs and evidence. Whenever these principles were applied to history, it was inevitable that the criticism which lies at its foundation should take a new form. It was seen that the use of any sources of history must be preceded by researches into their genuineness, and not merely into the genuineness of those which we possess, but also into the genuineness of those which are lost to us, but from which authors still extant have drawn their statements.

The other influence which helped to give a new form to historiography, proceeded from the great historical events of the age,—the American and French revolutions. These revolutions first brought men to feel that, in the history of a State, the chief stress ought not to be laid on those things which had hitherto been almost its sole topics,—wars, treaties, internal disturbances and struggles, and the personal relations of princes,—but on the growth of its form of government and constitution,—on everything which serves to throw light

on the relation of the whole people to the life of the State. How completely had this been neglected up to that time! Even in your England, where the idea of free citizenship had long ago awakened to active and conscious life, a thinker like Hume could assign such topics their place in appendices which he entitled "Miscellaneous Transactions." How long was it ere a Hallam conceived the idea of a "Constitutional History!" And a profound and spirited description of the condition of a people, in relation to its political principles and endeavours, such as is presented by the third chapter of Macaulay's admirable work, is the product of the present age alone.

Permit me to draw your attention, however, to the fact, that in this field too, the Germans were the first to break the soil. Soon after the outbreak of the first French Revolution, Spittler, of Göttingen, wrote a very clever and profound Hand-book of the History of the European States, in which their history is treated altogether with reference to their constitutional development, but which is, after all, a mere sketch, a skeleton, which the lectures of the author were to clothe with flesh and blood.

Some other writers on history had also begun to assign to this most important subject, a more prominent place than it formerly occupied. Thus, to some extent, Niebuhr had predecessors in this direction, when he placed the Roman constitution, and the struggles to which it gave rise, in the very foreground of his picture. But he had none in the application to history, of the method of criticism which had made

such great advances in philology. And what is still more, he was the first to combine both tendencies, a combination for which he possessed endowments rarely found in any age.

In his History of Rome, Niebuhr commenced the erection of an edifice, in the construction of which he would not employ the very smallest stone until he had carefully examined its fitness. Furnished with a comprehensive and profound acquaintance with the languages and literature of antiquity, he was fully qualified to apply the principles of the new tendency in philological criticism on a far wider scale, by the most acute examination and analysis of the original sources of history. What had hitherto (with a few exceptions which attracted no attention) been termed historical criticism, consisted partly in a reckless scepticism, which rejected entirely the remains of whole periods,—as Hume says, "The first page of Thucydides is in my opinion the commencement of real history,"—partly in testing contradictory statements in the accounts of the narrators of isolated events, by their greater or less probability. Another step had been taken shortly before Niebuhr's time. Instead of credulously receiving, or absolutely rejecting the whole, an effort was made to pick out the kernel of historical truth, from the midst of the mythical elements with which it was mixed up in tradition. But Niebuhr did not stop here. He comprehended in the fullest extent the changes which the objective, positive, and actual historical truth must undergo, in its subjective transmission, and the influence of which perpetuated itself

to after ages. Hence arose the following questions, which the true method of criticism must answer, before deciding on the trustworthiness of the original sources: —What would such a century, according to its modes of thought, be able and desirous to hand down to posterity? How has that which has been thus transmitted, been by later historians received, added to, or altered? 1. According to some general conception of the earlier period which had become current in their day. 2. According to their greater or less ability to test what they have received. 3. Or according to their political party-spirit, which often throws its own colouring over men's views of the past? These critical principles lead to the most fertile results. It follows from them, among other things, that narrations of events must be estimated, not merely by their own intrinsic degree of credibility, but also by the whole position of the narrator; a principle which had formerly been applied, only where the veracity, or want of veracity, in an author was already generally acknowledged. Further, that some fragments of an account, accidentally preserved, and overlooked or rejected by later writers, may contain the truth in far greater purity, than a detailed narration which has come down to us in its integrity. To seize the true meaning, and supply the deficiencies of such a fragment—from which Niebuhr sometimes extracted the most astonishing results—certainly demanded his delicate appreciation of style, and his power of divination. In the way in which he sometimes brought some important relation to light from a few mutilated lines, he resembled such

a naturalist as Cuvier, who from the fragments of a bone, determined the conformation of an extinct species of animals.

But Niebuhr was no less pre-eminently qualified for the political part of his task. He had early entered the invaluable school of public life, where he had acquired an unusually keen and penetrating eye for all political relations, and where many things came within the circle of his personal experience that can never be learned from books. He made himself acquainted with the most various spheres of action; scarcely anything which could be rendered instructive from any point of view, was without interest to his ever eager thirst for knowledge. Hence he was able to take a practical and technical view of subjects, which most learned men know only by name, or from superficial descriptions.

Thus he made far higher demands than most on archæology, or a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances of the nations of antiquity. That bare acquaintance with particular usages or forms, unaccompanied by insight into their meaning, with which the merely book-learned content themselves, went for very little with him; on the contrary, he strove to attain such a conception of ancient institutions, that their mutual dependence, their application, their practical working seemed to be preserved, in all their *living* activity, to his eyes. In accounts where his predecessors, who had made no such demands, had found no difficulties, nothing problematic, he encountered chasms, difficulties, impossibilities. In the attempt to remove these, and to form to himself a consistent picture of

the whole, he was often compelled to forsake established opinions, and to throw out new hypotheses, which he was enabled to suggest and maintain by the rich variety of his learning, the acuteness of his criticism, and his genius for combination. Criticism here showed itself as not merely negative, but as the stimulant and assistant to creative energy, while a vivid imagination helped the author to perfect his production. For imagination, if understood, not in the sense of an absolutely unfettered invention, but as the gift of restoring distinct outlines and colouring, to dim and faded forms, is as essential to the historical inquirer as to the poet, who does not decorate the materials furnished by history at his own free will, but colours the given outlines, according to conditions involved in their very nature.

The great and excellent qualities of Niebuhr's historiography grew from the same roots, which by a certain inward necessity produced the defects which may be laid to its charge; they are the inevitable shadow which accompanies, and exists only in virtue of, the dazzling light. If Niebuhr sometimes brought forward too daring hypotheses with the greatest confidence, it was because he was carried away by the extraordinary vividness of his conceptions; if, at a later period, he nevertheless exchanged these opinions for others, it was but in consequence of his never-wearied enthusiasm and love of research; if his narrative is often interrupted and disturbed by long disquisitions, the cause must be sought in the power and importance of the analytical and critical element, which according to Niebuhr's method, necessarily formed the chief basis

of his History. And the same cause necessarily occasioned the inequality of his style and language.

The writers who were incited through the influence of Niebuhr to new researches into the Roman history, occupy very different positions in relation to him. With some, reverence, admiration, and agreement preponderate. Among these is your fellow-countryman, Dr. Arnold, who, had a longer life been granted him, would no doubt have been the most worthy to carry forward the immortal work. Others concede to Niebuhr only a certain portion of his results, and set up other views in opposition to the remainder: others again controvert almost all his opinions. But all, with very rare exceptions, are standing on his ground; they have appropriated to themselves his critical method, and are fighting a great author with weapons which they have borrowed from himself. I share the conviction of many very clear-sighted men, that the most important of Niebuhr's results with regard to the earlier portion of the history of Rome, will remain as an enduring possession to science. But supposing, even, that all the positive results of these researches proved untenable, it would still be a great and glorious victory that his very antagonists had been forced to adopt his method: this method alone would secure a high position in all ages for Niebuhr's efforts in the development of science.

Inquiries into other periods have also yielded fair fruits to men who have prosecuted them after his example, and following in his footsteps; though many are unaware of the influence of this model on others, and even on themselves. For it is the highest victory

of a new method, when it carries away with it a man of intellect without his becoming conscious whence the tendency which he is obeying is derived. No doubt, many would shake their heads over some of these assertions, and would say that the principles of criticism, which I have ascribed to Niebuhr, had long been acknowledged and applied. But this is a mistake; they confound the presentiments and vague intimations of the right method, and an occasional application of it, with its full admission into science. It would be easy for me to prove this by a series of examples, did space permit.

LOEBELL.

BONN, *3rd of October*, 1851.

NIEBUHR AS A DIPLOMATIST IN ROME.*

BY THE CHEVALIER BUNSEN.

To sketch a picture of Niebuhr's life in Italy, is a task as attractive as it is difficult to the friend in whose inmost soul this picture reposes like a jewel among the treasures of a happy and eventful past. Whether it can ever be attempted to present something not quite unworthy of this picture and this past, must, like so many other things, be left to futurity and fate. That it cannot be done now, is as certain as, that if it could be done, this is not the place for it. In the Introduction prefixed to this section of the letters, by the friendly hand that accompanied this great mind with faithfulness and affection through his changeful outward and inward life, a delineation has been given equally dignified and simple, which will suffice for a general understanding of his history during the embassy in Rome. Enough lies before us, in this collection of letters, which is perhaps the most valuable presented to the world, in this country or in any period;—lastly, any one who has lived in the present age, which forms the setting to this remarkable and venerable picture, may know enough of it to enable him, with the assist-

* This Essay was written for the Lebensnachrichten, where it will be found, vol. iii. p. 303.

ance here afforded, to trace the outlines without further aid, and from them to derive a fresh insight into, and a deeper knowledge of Niebuhr and his times. But it is beyond the province of any one section of his biography to fill up these outlines into a complete picture,—to give an account of every single feature, of every accidental circumstance, of every apparent contradiction, —to exhibit the facts in connexion with each other, and with the present age. Niebuhr's intellect and inmost life were moulded at one cast, and the profoundest explanations of each portion lie in the whole, and can only be rendered intelligible by a successful representation of this whole. But such a one is at present, in my opinion, quite impossible. Niebuhr's inmost life is more intimately connected with the deepest movements, combinations, and struggles of suffering humanity in his own day, than that of any other great writer of his nation, or, I venture to say, of his age. He felt as a man, and sympathised with, observed, and thought for his fellow-men. While in so many memoirs, with which the present age is inundated and the future is intended to be deceived, the individual endeavours to represent himself to us as the centre of the events with which he was connected, a true biography of Niebuhr, on the contrary, would exhibit him as profoundly occupied with the universal weal and woe, finding solace and light upon the clear mountain-summits of antiquity, and erecting his rostra amid the noblest scenes of departed ages. It is a task imperative upon his future biographer to trace this influence in his writings as in his life. But just in so far as such a delineation would bring into

prominence the great and significant characteristics of his mind and life, it must be evident that, at the present time, it is impossible to proclaim that verdict upon human relations which they echo to the age just fled, and to the present, which will soon be numbered with it. Niebuhr took a position at once decided and modest, with regard to his age. While the antiquity which he described stood before his mind's eye like the present; so the present, in which he lived, was to him history, and, in all essential matters, he never surrendered himself to it in any other sense than the historian does to the past ages on which he sits in judgment;—loving it, but with the repressed sorrow of aspiration;—sympathising with it, but not enjoying it;—combatting folly and wickedness, but, for the most part, without any expectation of benefitting those whom he judges;—with scarcely a hope of victory for himself and the friends and fellow-thinkers to whom he utters his prophetic cry: yet, with all this, susceptible to every breath of life that blows upon him in the sultry atmosphere of reality,—thankful for every gleam of hope that casts a passing radiance on his dark and weary path. From such visitations he gathers fresh life; the former feeling constantly depresses and paralyses him. The destiny of humanity, the welfare of his fatherland, and the fate of its friends, these great points, without externally influencing his personal condition, affect him not less than the life of his own friends and the welfare of the dear ones to whom he has given his full heart of love; and if he expresses himself less frequently and fully about the former than about the latter, or for long

together suppresses all mention of them, his inward feeling for them is but the stronger and more oppressive. This is the key-note which vibrates through every part of Niebuhr's mature life, and that began while he was a mere youth.

To catch this tone from his own mouth, documents would have to be printed which it is to be hoped that our children will see; nay, if we were but to follow its echo through the extracts from his correspondence now lying before us, it would be necessary to consider relations belonging to the present as well as the past, and to place under the focus of history, those confused and fluctuating, erroneous and false representations of his contemporaries, which distressed Niebuhr, and against which he combatted. Let him do this who can. Here we shall not even attempt to give a picture of any part of that dark and mournful section of his life, comprising seven years and a half, which was so highly unfavourable to his fertility as an historian, and yet, in many respects, so important to himself, to science and the world. In this Essay we shall only endeavour briefly to characterise Niebuhr as a diplomatist in Rome, his conduct in diplomatic life, and his views of the relations themselves which he was called upon to discuss and regulate, so far as it appears necessary to an understanding and justification of his letters.

Niebuhr's views of the diplomacy and diplomatic life of our times, were by no means ideal. The prevalence of hollow phrases, instead of a dispassionate survey of each circumstance as it presents itself,—the growing rarity of a knowledge of civil and international law, and their

application in the intercourse of nations, with the spread of general, abstract modes of speech, open to the misconstructions of caprice and the passions of the day—these fancied miraculous expedients of a great part of modern diplomacy,—were not less repugnant to his inmost nature, than were the inanity and tedium to which the social intercourse of the higher circles in most parts of Europe is condemned, sometimes by fancied notions of propriety, sometimes by the irresistible attraction of mutual affinity. He often used to say, in jest, "The name diplomatist is a striking proof that the once favourite derivations of words from their contraries (as *lucus a non lucendo*) are not quite to be rejected; for it is evident that the greater part of the diplomatists in our day are only called so because they do not know how to read a diploma (*a non legendo diplomata*)."

The customary diplomatic mode of life he used to term *fuga vacui*, and to say of it what he had said in his youth of the great parties at the otherwise so agreeable house of his amiable friend Count Schimmelman, and which any one who chooses may hear from his own lips. Idle talk upon matters of lofty import, and a dwelling with pleasure upon trifling topics, were equally abhorrent to him. I shall never forget how Niebuhr spoke at a princely table in Rome, during the bloody scenes in Greece, of Suli and the Suliots, and the future of the Christian Hellenes, in much the same terms as he has spoken to posterity in a passage of his Roman History, which breathes a noble indignation and a sense that the brand of infamy still cleaves to us. The prince, a high-minded, amiable, and intelligent man,

listened, as did his guests, with attention and sympathy; a serious mood seemed to come over the whole party. A pause occurred. One of the guests, a diplomatist of Mephistophelian aspect and species, took advantage of it to turn the conversation. One of the eternally repeated trifles of the day, a so-called piece of news that must be repeated to the prince, was skilfully used as a stepping-stone, and in ten minutes the whole table was alive with a dispute between the spokesman and another person who had contradicted him upon a most important point:—what "Aurora" signified in the slang of the Roman coffee-houses, whether a mixture of chocolate with coffee or not. Niebuhr was silent. At last, with quiet earnestness and dignified mien, he spoke these words:—"What heavy chastisements must be still in store for us, when, in such times, and with such events occurring around us, we can be entertained with such miserable trifles!" All were mute, and Niebuhr also; a long pause ensued, and the mysteries of the Café Nuovo and the dwarf Bajocco were not mentioned again that day.

"Those were, after all, different times," he would say, "when Hugo Grotius lived in the great world; indeed we might be well pleased if intellectual conversations, like those described and handed down to us from the times of Louis XIV., and his successors up to the French Revolution, were not banished from our diplomatic dinners as *de mauvais ton.* Who was ashamed then to speak of an important intellectual production as of an event?—to express his enjoyment of literature, his interest in intellectual life? The taste of that age was

not indeed worth much, but it was at least a sign of life. There are, however, good and sufficient reasons for the phenomenon; much is owing to the alternation of political excitement and exhaustion, much to the endless divisions and diversions of society, and to the prominence of the politics of the day, and yet on this topic, very few can go beyond the hollow phrases of our time, and no one will talk except in a *tête-à-tête*." The ostentation, the extravagance, and the ruinous habit of contracting debts necessarily involved in such a mode of life, were naturally not less intolerable to him. "Where will all this end," he often exclaimed, "but with the universal bankruptcy towards which Europe is tending in the first general crisis?" "No diplomatist should lay by a penny of the salary which he receives in order to do honour to his country in his station, and to show hospitality to his countrymen," was another of his sayings; "with most there is little danger of this; but no one has a right to demand of him that he should spend his own property in addition, least of all for such objects."

The sacrifices he entailed upon himself by such views, —and views were with him inflexible principles, and maxims of life, a confession of faith,—the annoyances that awaited him, the misconstructions, nay slanders, to which he exposed himself, were by no means unknown to him when he decided upon accepting the embassy to Rome. But he had probably not fully realised what an oppressive influence they would actually exercise upon him, a pressure like that of a sultry and unhealthy atmosphere. It must, however, be remembered that he had never

reckoned upon remaining more than three or four years absent from Germany. A wide sphere of activity was not only in itself as much a necessity to his mind, as leisure for the investigation and representation of antiquity, in a circle of beloved sympathising friends or fellow-workers; he had been used to it from his youth up, and even his most learned investigations were based upon the contemplation of those public and social relations which are more or less perfectly expressed and mirrored in the circles of diplomatic life. I believe I may venture to say, that no eminent practical statesman in Europe, whose name will be mentioned with honour after his death, ever left Niebuhr after a conversation upon either past or present political relations, without the highest respect for his intellect and heart; in fact I have never heard the most distinguished of them speak of him but with admiration of his intellect and knowledge, and reverence for his exalted sentiments, however much they might differ from him in social habits or national views. This frank appreciation of Niebuhr by distinguished statesmen gave him great pleasure, although it sometimes pained him to find himself better understood, and his views regarded with greater sympathy in England and France, than in Germany and among Germans.

His motto, "*Tecum habita,*" his own ill health, and still more that of his wife, together with his limited means, kept him from living in an expensive manner, and led him to take no larger a share in the diplomatic parties and festivities than was rendered necessary by his position, or might be or appear conducive to the

service of the King and the objects of his mission. And in this respect, Niebuhr recognised the peculiar advantages afforded by Rome for his habits and views of life. What in other capitals and courts is a necessity (though not to the extent it is said to be),—the joining in the social whirl that involves still more loss of time than of money, and deadens the intellect still more than it wastes the time, is in Rome of no political importance whatever. "What a blessing it is," he used to say in his merry moods, "that there are no court ladies here; it is so difficult for mē to distinguish one from another." He generally declined the invitations of foreigners of rank, because he could not return them; this hindered him from forming family connexions, but not from intercourse with the distinguished men who sought his society. He never frequented entertainments among the Italians; he was to a certain extent glad that that nation who bore so little resemblance to their great forefathers, had not the remotest suspicion that the historian of Rome, and the greatest scholar of the age, was living in the midst of them. He was much obliged to them for leaving him in peace as a quiet "filosofo," and contenting themselves with occasionally imparting instruction to him. In reference to the instruction thus imparted in long calls and similar molestations, he used to say, "We do the Romans injustice when we say that not a true word comes out of their mouth; they say at least one true thing in every call, namely their farewell formula, '*adesso Le leverò l'incommodo.*'"

During the first part of his stay, he was ready to

associate with the scholars of Rome, properly so called, in their own peculiar sphere, and it was enough for him to learn that Nibby (a young man alluded to in one of the foregoing letters from Rome) was studying Greek for the sake of carrying on antiquarian researches,—an unheard-of circumstance at that time among the professed antiquarians,—to induce him to invite him frequently in the evenings, and encourage him in his labours. But even this connexion with the learned men of Rome was not of long continuance. How much sympathy and enthusiasm real Italian genius inspired in Niebuhr, and what a deep feeling he had for its peculiar greatness and elegance, was displayed most touchingly when he met with Count Giacomo Leopardi. I still remember the day when he entered with unwonted vivacity the office in which I was writing, and exclaimed, "I must drive out directly to seek out the greatest philological genius of Italy that I have as yet heard of, and make his acquaintance. Just look at the man's critical remarks upon the Chronicle of Eusebius. What acuteness! what real erudition! I have never seen anything like it before in this country. I must see the man." In two hours he came back. "I found him at last, with a great deal of trouble, in a garret of the Palazzo Mattei; instead of a man of mature age, I found a youth of two or three and twenty, deformed, weakly, and who has never had a good teacher, but has fed his intellect upon the books of his grandfather, in his father's house at Recanati; has read the classics and the Fathers; is at the same time, as I hear, one of the first poets and writers of his nation, and is withal poor, neglected, and

evidently depressed. One sees in him what genius this richly endowed nation possesses." Capei has given a pleasing and true description of the astonishment experienced by both the great men at their first meeting; of the tender affection with which Niebuhr regarded Leopardi, and all that he did for him. This, and the subsequent fate of this great and noble-minded man, who ended his joyless life in 1837, do not belong here; but the trait we have mentioned is characteristic of Niebuhr's social life in Rome, and important for the prevention of misunderstandings which might be occasioned by isolated passages in his letters. Especially characteristic, however, was his affection and concern for the Prussian and German disciples of art and science who were in Rome with him. He considered it as his duty, and an agreeable part of his vocation, to render them assistance, to encourage and further them in their studies, and to devote to them the time of which he was so sparing towards men of mere show and fashion. To Niebuhr belongs the glory of having been the first to recognise the men who have founded the German historical school of painting,—which, after philosophy, poetry, and philology, is of all the manifestations of the German mind of this epoch, the most important to the history of humanity;—of having loved them; of having encouraged them with a devoted friendship, as modest as it was generous, and rendered them pecuniary assistance when necessary. They are now appreciated and admired both in their own country and abroad; at that time, they were the martyrs of an exalted and noble aspiration that had to fight its way through the

wickedness not less than the shallowness of the times, and against which, the low and false taste of the leading connoisseurs and patrons of art of that day, had joined in a conspiracy with the licentiousness and incapacity of most of the artists. Niebuhr recognised in these aspirations of men like Cornelius, Overbeck, Philip Veit and William Schadow,—aspirations which had hitherto given but few outward signs of their existence,—a fresh impulse,—closely connected in essence with the other great movements of the nation,—of that re-awakened and life-begetting genius of Germany, which had inspired Lessing, Kant, and Goethe,—had prepared a new spiritual epoch of humanity by means of a profounder philosophy and a living historical science;—and finally, had animated the noblest minds, and through them the whole nation, with a self-sacrificing public spirit, that had led them amidst national songs and hymns with joy and faith to battle and to death, for the cause of their king and their father-land. The remembrance of 1813 was still warm in every heart when Niebuhr came to Rome, as it was in him to his last hour. The modern German art,—the only one which deserves this name,—came into being at the same time, after similar mental struggles; and though it arose in a foreign land, yet it was impressed with the spirit of the nation, and laboured in its service. That this school alone had struck out the right path and was pursuing the proper aim, could not but be recognised by him, who had already so early perceived and admired in the great historical artists, from Giotto to Raphael, the compeers of the ancient Hellenic schools of art,—

brethren in spirit of Dante and Goethe. In spite of the individual defects and incompletenesses of the early works of this modern school, Niebuhr perceived in its founders and their productions, the vital principle which animated them in their opposition to the spirit of the age, and had confidence in that creative power which had united itself with clear insight and a determined will. To this faith he adhered with unshaken firmness, and on it he acted, at a time when the germ from which he expected and announced a great and historically important development was wholly unknown or unappreciated in Germany, while in Rome it was despised, derided, and vituperated, as it would be even now, in many parts of his own country, if men dared to give vent to their secret aversion. This recognition of a spiritual phenomenon in its first beginnings, is one of the numerous and most remarkable prophetic traits in Niebuhr's mind, and all the more striking, because, of all spiritual phenomena, none lay farther from him, judging from his peculiar cast of mind and the history of his life, than the arts of painting and sculpture. It is not only meritorious but worthy of fame in after ages, when the powerful ones of the earth protect and encourage the great and noble productions of science and art; but it is a much rarer and more blessed thing—only given to the open eye of genius, and to the quiet and humbly-listening ear of a noble-minded man, to recognise greatness in its bitter root, in its harsh and repulsive husk, and to tend the future all-conquering genius with love and reverence, when his young pinions lie as yet folded in inactivity. When

further, such a faculty is found at an advanced period of life, in a state of mental depression, when the magic of youth has vanished, the bloom of life faded, the eye, to use a touching expression of Niebuhr's, is filled with sand; then, such an enthusiasm as Niebuhr experienced, and expressed and unalterably retained for those efforts, becomes worthy of all reverence. Certainly and very naturally, this enthusiasm took a personal character; Niebuhr knew no other, because he believed in no spiritual power apart from personality, and looked upon all else as only its embryo, or husk, or scoria; but Niebuhr did not love the art because he had a blind personal love for those who confessed and sought to establish it; he loved its disciples, because he recognised that which they adored to be true art, living and putting forth proofs of its power in them. A personal prepossession might, perhaps, have been able to blind him for a time, but the delusion would soon have found its own punishment, and the undeserved favour have been changed into decided aversion. This distinction is absolutely necessary in order not to misunderstand Niebuhr: he hated what he considered as evil with conscientious vehemence, but he loved what he deemed worthy of love with passion, and, what is rarely united with it, constancy.

Such were Niebuhr's views of diplomatic life, and such was his own life as a diplomatist. Who could wish that he should have applied differently the leisure that remained to him for social intercourse? How many still bless him to whom he devoted this leisure in order to elevate their minds, to purify their hearts, to warn

them against the perils of the age, to be a brother and a father to them in counsel and deed? And who of the rest would now thank him for having invited them to balls and dinners? Niebuhr, however, was extremely ready to show honour and hospitality to all his countrymen according to his ability, when he was not repelled in the first instance by vulgar arrogance; this was the case sometimes, and to this refer expressions such as those of the 7th of April, 1821, (p. 198); but he never experienced anything of the kind from foreigners. Once during the time he was in office he had occasion to give a great entertainment; it was on the visit of the Chancellor of State, Prince Hardenberg, in 1821. Its object was, to make the Prince acquainted with the Roman nobility and the rest of the high society in Rome, and at the same time to present his countrymen to him. Niebuhr could not bring himself to give a ball. It was, therefore, necessary to contrive a musical entertainment. Niebuhr abhorred the modern Italian operatic music. It seemed to him appropriate to have the music which is peculiar to Rome, and is unlike anything else in the world, performed before the Chancellor; this was all the more natural, as it is considered a part of *bon ton* throughout Europe, that every foreigner should have heard the celebrated singing in the Sistine Chapel during Passion week, although most of these hearers do not care the least about the matter in their hearts, but hate it as much as the modern composers despise it; like Voltaire, who smiles superciliously at the Iliad. A few weeks before, he had had the same music performed for his former

chef and warm friend, the noble Baron Von Stein, (see p. 192,) which had made a deep impression upon the two friends, who were both in general comparatively insensible to the influence of music, as well as upon the assembled company. The idea was, therefore, carried out on the present occasion with augmented appliances. Prince Christian of Denmark, and his consort, honoured the festival with their presence. The conversation which preceded the music was very animated; the arrangements and entertainment received applause. But when afterwards, the gay assemblage repaired to the brilliantly lighted saloon of the palace, where the choir awaited them in a gallery in the back ground, and suddenly, sixteen singers from the Chapel filled the apartment with the sublime strains of another world, the assembly was evidently seized with a peculiar feeling. Many grew quite uneasy when speech suddenly died on the lips, and jests and playfulness found no response; some were positively driven out of the saloon and the house by the serious turn which the affair had taken, and all found themselves in a different mood from that in which they had entered the room, or which they had anticipated. The satisfaction of the Prince and Princess, and the joyful thanks of several fellow-countrymen and a few foreigners, rewarded Niebuhr for the ungrateful task of providing a more worthy entertainment for his guests than they were used to, and for the mortification of being reminded by the ill-humour of others of a certain scriptural lesson respecting pearls. Had Niebuhr wanted any further consolation, he would have been amply satisfied by the circumstance, that, in the

following year, his King expressly requested that this music might be performed before him at the entertainment given him by Cardinal Gonsalvi, on which occasion the company was never weary of praising the music and the taste of the selector.

In the foregoing letters, Niebuhr briefly mentions having received the grand cross of the Leopold order from the Emperor of Austria. The cause of this mark of distinction deserves to be more particularly mentioned. When the van of the imperial army had reached Rome by forced marches, and an instant attack on the passes of Antrodoco appeared to be the surest means of putting an immediate and bloodless end to the Neapolitan revolution, the military chests were found to be exhausted. Some hundred thousands of florins were absolutely necessary if operations were to be carried on. The house of Torlonia, to whom application was made, declared themselves ready to advance the sum, if Niebuhr would give bills for the amount on the Seehandlung in Berlin. The imperial ambassador laid the state of the case before him. Niebuhr recognised its urgency, and undertook the responsibility without hesitation; nay, in order to obtain the full amount desired, he took up a considerable sum, on his own personal credit, from the Prussian Consul-general Valentini. By this means the business was settled in a few days, and the progress of the undertaking secured. The government at Berlin sanctioned the proceeding of their envoy, and the Emperor expressed his gratitude by the above-mentioned mark of distinction.

But we must hasten to conclude our sketch of

Niebuhr's diplomatic life, if we are not to exceed our intended limits. Before we proceed to the second part of these notices, we wish to say a few words about Niebuhr as a diplomatic man of business. Few men of so much genius have ever conducted business with such order. Niebuhr's conscientiousness effected, in a higher sphere, what in others is done by habit and outward rules. His business style was peculiar without being *doctrinaire;* his reports and notes will always appear to us at least a model of clear and business-like writing, unless we are to take the clumsiness of the usual German business style, and the hollow poverty of the ordinary diplomatic notes, as our ideal. Those who only know Niebuhr's style from his writings, would be inclined to expect too great brevity, and a somewhat obscure conciseness; but quite erroneously. The statement is throughout flowing and easy, purely business-like, and addressed to the practical statesman; although, as some one has naïvely remarked of his conversation, one must take care not to let one's attention be distracted. His political memorials are unequalled models of statesman-like writing, even apart from their varied and weighty contents. Their straightforwardness and frankness give a faithful representation of the manner in which Niebuhr constantly applied his rich treasures of knowledge, experience, and reflection to the requirements of the present, kept the universal ever in view, and brought all that occurred to him in the course of his expositions to bear upon the welfare of his fatherland. A time will come, when the circumstances treated of in those reports and memorials will become a matter

of history, and most of the contemporary diplomatic papers will be left to moulder in oblivion. Not till then, will it be really known what Niebuhr was.

His written narratives and expositions were also a faithful picture of the manner in which he conducted verbal negotiations and deliberations. The greatest honesty appeared to him the highest wisdom, assuming that the negotiator is perfectly acquainted with his own wishes and claims, and as much so as possible with the aims and power of the other party. With this principle, Niebuhr commenced his career in Rome, and never forsook it; and, if we may judge from the results, never had cause to repent of his fidelity to it.

This naturally leads us to the second point on which a few hints and explanations seem indispensably necessary; namely, Niebuhr's views respecting the negotiations with Rome, and the relations of Protestant governments in general to the papal chair. Even during his lifetime, Niebuhr was censured and misunderstood by some of his early friends, on account of his views on this subject; and it may be foreseen that now, when that point has become one of the vital questions of the day, nothing will be left untried, particularly by the opposite party, on the one hand, to bring him into opposition with himself, or with the government which he served with all the powers of his mind and soul; and on the other to weaken, by calumnies, the testimony of the first historian of Europe respecting that of which he was a witness. Some might, for instance, attempt to infer from the expressions in the letter to Perthes of September, 1815,

(p. 14), that he had submitted to become the organ and defender of a system of government, with reference to the Romish Church, that in his conscience he disapproved. To obviate this and similar misconceptions, and to give a correct idea of Niebuhr's position in Rome, is the sole object of the following remarks, and will form a sufficient justification of him to every unprejudiced person.

That letter to Perthès is certainly a most remarkable one. It is written in the period succeeding Amelia's death, in which Niebuhr was living, as it were, in the presence of the loved departed one; his heart was full of sorrowful affection, free from bitterness or violence, but also without hope or care for the concerns of this life. This state of mind often allows his prophetic gift with regard to his own future to appear with peculiar prominence, and those lines exhibit a very striking instance of it. But to understand rightly what he there says of the conflict with his convictions, in which his official duties in Rome would place him, we should first look at the extremely important letter to Madame Hensler, of the 15th of October, 1815 (p. 18), which developes his ideas more clearly. Then, too, it must be remembered, that Niebuhr had not at that time received his instructions, which were not sent to him till the summer of 1820, after he had been learning the position of affairs in Rome, from personal observation, for nearly four years, and fully expressed his views in all respects to his government, and come to an understanding with them; so that the despatches which reached him at last may be said to have been the result of this understanding.

Much light is thrown upon these circumstances by the confidential expression of his wishes and counsels, with regard to some leading principles, contained in the important and beautiful letter to Nicolovius of the 22nd of January, 1817 (p. 83). His expressions on the termination of the negotiations are not less conclusive against such a supposition, as may be seen by comparing the letter (p. 196), with his statements: "I have obtained things which have never before been conceded;" "I can look with satisfaction upon the negotiation now ended; all has been accomplished that could have been, in accordance with the instructions received."

In order, however, to understand all such passages, as fully as every reader would wish to do, especially at the present moment, it is necessary to give a general outline of Niebuhr's position in relation to the views most prevalent in Germany, which each can fill up afterwards for himself. Niebuhr has stated his sentiments on this subject so often, and to so many by word of mouth, as well as in writing, that it is scarcely necessary expressly to remark, that what is here said flows from no source which might be considered as belonging to official secrets, though its amplification would have to be sought in Niebuhr's despatches and memorials.

Niebuhr found two views prevailing at that time among writers as well as public men respecting the relation of the State to the Roman Catholic Church, neither of which satisfied him, but on the contrary were offensive to him as a philosopher, an historian, and a statesman, inasmuch as they appeared to him to have proceeded from the decomposition of the vital elements

of the Church and State, and to be a consequence of the decline of sound views and doctrines respecting them. I will here only briefly mention, merely for the sake of those who do not know or do not understand his great historical work—and such, it must be confessed, form the majority, especially in Germany—that Niebuhr possessed a well digested view of the State, which had become a living picture in his mind, and by which his scattered expressions respecting history and public affairs, as well as his whole political life, are to be interpreted. It was this idea of the State, which was a philosophical, no less than an historical and practical one, although he had not wrought it out into a well-founded and complete system, which he, as a youth, opposed with healthy aversion to the negative and destructive doctrines and opinions, which prevailed at that time consciously or unconsciously in society and the literary world, and to the wide-spread jacobinism which he utterly abhorred. It was essentially the same view which he, as a statesman and philosopher, in the full feeling of his superiority, opposed, now with a smile of pity, now with indignant rebuke, to the shallow, one-sided, stubborn attempts to restore political science by means of the crude negations of jacobinism, or a few elementary, abstract, pliant propositions. Now among the views respecting the relative position of the civil and ecclesiastical powers, with which he came in contact, that one was especially repugnant to him which teaches that the highest wisdom of a government consists in exercising a sort of minute and centralised police surveillance, and administrative control over the Roman Catholic Church. Niebuhr was firmly convinced

of the contrary, and often expressed this in very strong terms, unconcerned, as it became such a man, respecting the laughable misconceptions, and even the malicious constructions, to which it exposed him. The limitation of this oversight of the Roman Catholic Church to the preservation of the independence of the State, and the evidently indispensable protection of the government against an unlimited ecclesiastical power, external to the national life and the commonwealth,—this, which appeared to him the leading fundamental idea of the existing laws, and the object to be aimed at in practice, seemed to others a treason against the principles of the Prussian Code, and an abandonment of the ideal of monarchy. But Niebuhr was neither to be disconcerted by the appeal to the so-called "good principles," which the passions of men have in every age made their watch-word, nor yet by the bugbear of the Prussian Code. He knew that many general phrases and expressions, which had crept into the Code from the one-sided, often quite untenable, doctrinary views of the day, had through the force of circumstances, and the justice and mildness of the government, become a dead letter, which a practical statesman was bound to leave, like so much else, unrevived, inasmuch as a dead letter is always infinitely better than one "that killeth." But Niebuhr did not conceal from himself that the practical influence of these hostile views might greatly paralyse and interfere with his discharge of the duties of his office, and to this the words in the letter to Perthès are to be referred: "The ambassador is merely the instrument of carrying out the orders which he receives, and

how little these orders are likely to be in accordance with my convictions, I can already foresee." The letters, referred to above, show, that while his convictions underwent no alteration, his apprehensions were not justified by the event. Among others the well-known fact may be referred to, that upon his proposal made from Rome, the government immediately consented to the direct transmission of the Roman Catholic requests for dispensations of marriage, from the bishops to the embassy charged with their presentation and advocacy, and to the immediate transmission of the papal rescripts to the bishops—a measure which produced a most desirable simplification of nine-tenths of the current business between Prussia and Rome.

But there was yet another view at this time, from which Niebuhr very distinctly dissented throughout the whole course of his mission. It was this, that the government ought to favour the wishes expressed for an internal remodelling of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany, abstain from all negotiation in Rome, or even declare itself the organ of those views to the Papal Court, and carry them into execution. Niebuhr did all justice to the individuals of this party who were really in earnest about the main point—the religious and moral elevation of their church—and did not simply desire to carry out the impracticable theory of a German Handbook of Canonical Law, in opposition to the Pope, or to set up for popes themselves. But as a philosopher and historian, he held their aims impossible of attainment, and as a statesman, the highest wisdom, as well as justice, seemed to him to demand that a Protestant

government should, of all others, be the last to enter on such a course. On this point also Niebuhr had every reason to be fully satisfied with the part he had taken.

Niebuhr's own view was based entirely on the three leading traits of his character,—conscientious piety, incorruptible integrity, and burning patriotism. His reverence for the views of Christianity which friends and pious men such as Stolberg and Fénélon held sacred, made him regard a tender and reverent handling of everything connected with these views as an imperative duty in the case of individuals as well as that of nations. I remember his once saying to me, in reference to this, "How much easier to myself I could make my position in Rome, and how much more satisfaction could I give in various quarters, nay, even reap applause, if I were but an atheist!" A deep text, suggesting many reflections. The respect for the rights of others which was with Niebuhr a second nature, never allowed him to forget the duties which a Christian government had taken upon itself with reference to the Roman Catholic population, by the very rights which she claimed with regard to their church. Finally, his love for his German father-land, both in the narrower and wider sense of the term, strengthened these sentiments. Niebuhr saw in the "truce of God," between the members of the two confessions,—whom a calamitous war on the plains and mountains of their primitive home had left as rival bodies, and yet spiritually and by affinity one nation,—the only guarantee for the unity of the Germans, and consequently for the preservation

of their freedom and independence. On this ground he wished to avert everything that might disturb that peace, and call up the lurking demons. What he said on this point, in his famous address to his beloved hearers, in 1830, flowed from a loving heart, oppressed, nay sometimes uncontrollably agitated by the vehemence of its emotions, which never belied itself in this or any other portion of his life. No statesman of any age or nation who has a heart in his bosom, and feels the sorrows of humanity and the heavy burdens of the past and present, can see without emotion, how strong a sympathy and interest Niebuhr felt as a fellow-countryman and Christian, in all that he recognised as the real wants and essential rights of his fellow-citizens of the Roman Catholic Church, from the poverty of the parish priest on the Rhine, to the elective rights of the German cathedral chapters, nor fail to remark the contrast this spirit presented to Napoleon's niggardly spirit, and the right which he claimed to the arbitrary nomination of the bishops, as it exists in nearly all Roman Catholic countries.

In Niebuhr's opinion, the government was bound to provide for the institutions necessary to the existence and efficiency of that Church in the land. With respect to public instruction, he considered it indispensable that it should bear a character of nationality, combined with a due consideration of the existing religious and ecclesiastical wants; and regarded every admixture of a foreign, exclusive and separatist influence on the great educational institutions of modern times, as pernicious; while, on the other hand, he deemed the ecclesiastical

character of the episcopal seminaries for the conclusion of the clerical education, judicious and wholesome. But with respect also to strictly spiritual relations, he held that the government, guided by the principles we have indicated, ought, in the first instance, to take counsel with their own consciences and their Roman Catholic clergy and statesmen, and then to establish whatever their paternal solicitude might point out to them as their duty.

Further, Niebuhr believed that negotiations with the Court of Rome were the surest and most natural means of attaining these noble and desirable ends, and of laying the foundation of a more flourishing condition of the Church. The conclusion of a Concordat he had considered from the first as an altogether inadmissible idea, because he knew, that in the present position of a fully organised European State to the Romish ecclesiastical power, no Concordat whatever can be concluded with honesty, even apart from the peculiar case of Protestant governments. With his principles, and his character as a Roman historian and a German statesman, had he not brought this conviction with him to Rome, it would have been forced upon him by the negotiations and proceedings of which he was a witness and a judge during his residence there. The statements of his views on these subjects will one day prove a mine of gold to the reflecting statesman, and the historian conversant with public life.

In Niebuhr's opinion, the negotiations with Rome ought to have no other object than to give solemnity to the establishment of the resolutions that should be

adopted after mature deliberation, as the result of an open and sincere understanding respecting the individual practical points, the canonical forms, and the modern development of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. Both parties, he considered, must seek a basis for their friendly relations, not afforded by their conflicting principles, in the common interest felt in the object of their cares, and the practical importance of the points concerned in their deliberations; further, in the still greater importance of the fact of an honest understanding between them being possible. He believed that such an understanding would be a benefit to both Church and State, and a security to universal peace, beneath whose fostering wings the life of European nations might attain its full development. In all these, to him, fundamentally important views, Niebuhr had the satisfaction of finding the fullest concurrence on the part of the Prussian government during his negotiations. If he was deceived—if it was an error to suppose that a Protestant government, conscientiously acting with a view to the highest welfare of its subjects, might carry its enlightened views with regard to the Roman Catholic Church, into effect by means of an understanding with Rome,—if in spite of these pure intentions, malignant agitation and priestly pretension now threaten with fresh storms the repose of Germany and of the world, which it was hoped would be secured by these relations,—Niebuhr's ashes may still be suffered to rest in peace. He shared this error, if such it was, with the noblest minds of his nation, and he and they will, perhaps, be all the dearer to posterity for the sake of this very error.

Trust and patience are never thrown away, especially in the case of a powerful government, and extended historical experience can never be bought too dearly by those who remain true to themselves.

Further, it must be said, that in the views we have pourtrayed, Niebuhr thought as a practical statesman, who takes reality as he finds it. He said once to a very distinguished English statesman, still living, who had consulted him while in Rome with reference to similar relations with the Court of Rome, "Do everything in your power for the benefit of your Catholics; give their clergy salaries, and have them well educated at home, but never keep an ambassador in Rome."

That he did not conceal from himself the perils of the future,—that he well knew how much of the then peaceable intentions of Rome was owing to the personal character of the pious Pope and his excellent Cabinet, and the instructive discipline of a period of tribulation, is sufficiently proved by his expressions in his letter to Madame Hensler, of the 4th of May, 1822.

I cannot conclude these lines, written in England, without expressing the pleasure I have derived from the appreciation and high esteem with which my ever-revered master and fatherly friend is here regarded by statesmen and scholars,—and especially from the pure enthusiasm with which he has inspired the most earnest and noble portion of the youth of this country. His influence, which is apparent to every observer, is not adequately represented even by the fact that a much

larger number of copies of the English translation of his History of Rome have been sold than of the German original, though many of the latter have also found their way to England. Niebuhr's incomparable superiority to all the critics of modern times,—the deep truth of his historical views and political maxims,—the pregnant solidity of his earnest and dignified, if not easy style,—the elevation of his moral views of the world,—all this had long been acknowledged, in the homage paid to the Roman historian by the most distinguished men of every party in Church and State. But the pure human greatness of his noble heart,—his unspotted life,—his unwavering courage amid ill-health and disappointed or overclouded hopes,—the devoted love of such a mind,—the elevating and childlike faith in the divinity of virtue and truth,—the union of qualities and capacities of heart and intellect so rarely seen in combination,—in a word, the image presented in the letters before us, has raised that esteem to personal attachment, and the seeds of knowledge and virtue so richly scattered through them have fallen on a good and fruitful soil.

Well may we Germans term this joy a sorrowful one, when we turn our eyes to the disgraceful efforts of little-minded men, who, humbled beneath the grave and piercing glance of genius, have fallen a prey to their own mean passions, and conspired with the disciples of impiety, and the apostles of everything un-German, to spy out the weak points of a great man with malicious joy, and use them with Mephistophelian address for their own ends; but it is so ordained that meanness

and wickedness must hate nobleness and greatness, and Niebuhr's chief failing—that of yielding in such cases to immoderate vexation—shall not be imitated by his friends.

BUNSEN.

LONDON, *28th of February*, 1839.

THE END.

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 28 March, 2016